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CHRIST AND THE PEOPLE.

BY THE RT. REV. DR. BENSON,

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, February 8, 1885.

MATTHEW, ix. 36.

"They fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous."

So looked Christ at the masses; so He spoke of them. How has the world [illegible] the increase of its own masses to be its last invincible difficulty. Ancient kings invented monstrous tasks for them to perform or monstrous wars to wage. Some ancient states held periodical massacres of them; philoso[illegible] ment by them was a mere transition to despotisms; even priests in the Holy Land exclaimed, in despair, "This multitude which knoweth not the law are cursed." The Roman Empire, whose brute force was for centuries sufficient for anything, kept the masses in order at last by daily distributions of food and tickets for the circus, and, after all, perished under the masses with which it could not deal. In all heathen-like times the road to ruin was begun the moment that the masses began to multiply beyond the bounds at which they served as mere producers for the ruling classes. First contempt and then fear were the emotions with which the multitude had been regarded universally. Was there one person in all the world in the year of our Lord 31, except the Lord Himself, who, looking over the multitude, could or would have said "This is God's harvest; the [illegible] golden corn, the wealth of God's garner, the seed which He sowed in His wide fields, now grown up and ripe. With all their crushing, all com[illegible]

to despise, they cannot be made anything else. Eye and mind have to [illegible] ner them for God; we cannot allow the harvest to rot upon the [illegible] out all the laborers that there were—every one; and He gave them power—power to expel the unclean spirits from the crowd and to tend all their sufferings back to health; He gave them the present gift [illegible] what He was laying it on us to do by patience and devotion, but [illegible] with the work after his departure, and yet again He briefly gave them the principles on which the work was to be continued by others until the world's end. And the central principle, He said, was to be courage; they were never to be afraid. He said that three times—"never to be afraid"—because the power which He then gave He would always go on [illegible] who had to use it.

Now, this is all described point by point, as you know, in the tenth chapter of St. Matthew, and in the few verses of the ninth which introduce it. He then preluded what He was about to found: a mission with [illegible] quench—a power which is ever ready to burst forth and spring up at the true touch of faith. This is the power on which the Church of London is casting herself this week. The form may be infinitely varied, but His mission is the same for ever, the same which He sent His own companions to work in for the first time in the towns of His earthly country. In the Church of London and our country—it is only the scene that is changed—how vast a change is going on! A change has fallen upon [illegible] planned, and it has been in unlooked for ways.

The pastor over whom all [illegible] preaches not here but from the endless world where he was carried so quickly, not knowing whither he went; he still preaches peace to you, the peace of unrestful, calm labor, stainless honor, self-subduing love of souls. Your new pastor is not yours yet; but the very hope of him is a mission. I know how the very thought of him calls up intensity of intention, fixity of faith, reality of strenuous sympathy, manly care for man. Oh, let all the regions of our

thoughts catch the stir with which we shall now be stirred. And for ourselves, let prayer be strong and keen this week for the men who suffer and the homes which sorrow; and then let your sympathies stand for the prayers of the Church in the saving of men's souls. Let us not be to-day for both Church and multitude. Let not the Church to-day be as the multitude, a simple object for the pity of Christ when she should be as herself.

And have I spoken as if the multitude were the multitude of the poor only? It is not so; many rich are poorer than they. Christ's multitude is not the multitude of the poor alone. All souls have wandered—some very far—and all are dear; the poor themselves are not the same unchanged people that they had promised to be until he came back a century ago; they had remained everywhere, it is well said, as in truth in archaic disorganization. But education makes an [illegible] as it is now administered, and some fear the change. But why? Why should education [illegible] people whom we have more or less directly to [illegible] affected us? Or, not [illegible] to different ends? For whatever neglected or uneducated, the poor are still not the only multitude [illegible] whom He yearns because they want food and leading. I dare not [illegible] that Lord Haliburton [illegible] of the moral needs of a class [illegible] people; and as for the rich, did those simple disciples [illegible] no one could be saved if the rich were not saved, we know how He characterized the difficulties of the rich in the way of salvation by [illegible] that many seem as one overstrained simile. It is not the fatal luxuries usually [illegible] which the rich man readily and willingly brings to Christ, but the [illegible] less pound of engrossing cares, their infinite intimacies with personal affairs, the interminable incidents of their intercourse—it is all this much more than wealth, which makes it difficult for great reflective creatures like faith, like hope, like thoughtful charity to effect a lodgment in their souls. Plato has said: "Appetites cease on the subdual of a young man's heart, because through lack of science in his father's training of him they (the appetites) find his heart outside of sound knowledge, and of beautiful studies, and of true theories, which keep the best watch and ward over the minds of men who are favorites of heaven." Now, who could be a better witness than a heathen thinker as to what are the real wants of a Christless multitude? What insight was his into the conditions of human souls! And mark the unconscious Christianity in Plato's own soul. What

this is the very truth about all that multitude which Christ calls the harvest of God. Poverty or riches have little or nothing to do with it. He yearns and sends His servants with power to labor for those whom His servant Plato pined but could not help. "All who are outside of sound knowledge and beautiful studies and of true literature." The sound, the beautiful, the true—that is what He yearns to create in them.

Friends, do you not agree with me that across all the advances of this [illegible] there is a yearning for something more true and [illegible] in earnest, and they want to be so if they can find their way. I believe there are few hearts indeed which do not bear me witness in this; few which are satisfied with what they have unless they have really found one thing which is needful; few which are looking forward with comfort to the ending of life, should nothing more be sought and found meantime than that which they have already. The man who says that he cannot mingle the thought of an eternity of any sort with the thought of his business, because it would distract among transactions which he must effect; the man who, being wise and affectionate in his family, regular and useful in his neighborhood and his parish, feels that he may not come to His Lord's Table, because, says he, "there is something not quite unexceptionable in the details of my business"—can you have any two witnesses more convincing than those two men that there is a region of the healthful, the beautiful, and the true into which many of us know very well we are not admitted? Ay, and those two men tell us as plainly, as if in so many words, that there is a twilight state of the spirit out of which the sunlight is rapidly fading; and if there were only such men as these two mingling among the multitude, would not that first cry be still necessary: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"? that is, change these poor [illegible] there is a heaven of reality close beside you. Within or without it you must be. Where are you, and what will you choose, and where will you

be? Oh, repent that you may be within it! Is this, your uneasiness, to go for nothing? Rather is it not like the first scarcely-felt numbness of a cancer, or the first heat of a fever, which asks imperiously for a physician? But, friends, these are not the only witnesses. The crowd is a cloud of witnesses: the Apostle of the Hebrews, in that epic eleventh chapter of his, singles out name by name, in the cloud upon which his eye rested, the heroic witnesses to the power of faith until time fails him. One loves to think how his eye might rest upon some church now, and his inspired tongue single out name by name the witnesses to the weakness of little faith, and to the nothingness of unfaith. Could he not point to this man and to that in middle life whose heart hungers for faith, but owns to himself that there is disappointment in all that he has sought, and that life as it is is not worth living, yet must be lived? And yet that man is quite clear as to this, that in spite of his hunger of spirit and his disappointment nothing would induce him to change places with that neighbor of his who is perfectly satisfied with himself and with his doings. He prefers his soul hungry to its last satisfaction. The apostle would point you to another near him, who, for fear of the world's contempt, once took to expressing doubts about religion, which he did not feel, and to seem to exclude religion from the list of motives which he dared to avow in choosing any course of action: and now he looks upon his recent insincerities, during he knows not whether an avenging or a compassionate hand steer him when he was young.

Who cannot sympathize with the pain and labor of real doubts in religion? For genuine doubt exists constantly as its opposite, religion both to the mind and to spirit. Such activity does not require pity; something great, at least for the individual, must come of it. But what believer can help pitying the poor shallow little mind which cannot and does not wish to understand the difficult answers to its voluble interrogations? There sits a woman who, in the gaiety and luxury of her earlier married life gave up her communion and private prayer and [illegible], and now she sits quiet and shabby, serving day and night [illegible] and not. Good she is to the poor, helpful to all: but she says faith awakes no echo in her heart; she does not know God; she is comfortless, and her husband's comfortless illness is passing away from her love. He is cold and casual to her now, not unkind; busy and interested [illegible] his ruling powers: he has come to love [illegible]

lips; part of the code is to be left to him, but another part is to be replaced by very different commandments; another basis is offered for those that remain. Does not that figure in our multitude lack some gift to enable him to choose strength and peace instead of weakness and hunger of heart. There is one who, years ago, had a quarrel with a friend, took offence, has never forgiven it, refuses to be reconciled; since then his reverence for man, his trust in God, has been steadily dwindling, his heart has been narrowing—it is dry, it will be quite withered and good for nothing if nothing restores that old friendship to its place. That married pair have had their times of happiness; but one or both have grossly missed the fact that self-sacrifice is the secret of love. The love of their children, the honor they themselves are held in, are not a perfect bond of peace; a trifle, a grotesque trifle, sometimes may overthrow their peace after works of tranquility. "I have loved in thee that which is eternal," said a dying man to his wife; but this poor pair were self-seekers even in the first flush of love, and they have sought self ever since. Sometimes they have had a satisfaction in each other's success, yet there has been self even in the success of each other. There is a new spiritual gift required to bring this right; they have tried everything else. And there is one figure which in its appearance haplessness moves us more than all of these. While other children have been brought up far from sight or sound of ill, there is a child whose innocence was spoilt very early, upon whom the knowledge of evil was in a manner forced quite young. I am not thinking of what is to come here or afterwards, but only of what is the poor broken vessel—the little life. Such breakages will go on in the ministry of a great house as easily as in the cedar or the garret. I have not spoken of need but—not build sin and shame, dishonor, disease, penury, the pleasure-seeker, dealing out for his pleasure bodily and mental and spiritual agonies and death to others—all darkness, children of the devil. I said nothing of illness, dissolution, heartbrokenness, diseases, penury. Those are cases which the very compassionateness of the crowd itself heralded and laid appealingly at the feet of Jesus. But the crowd's own self, the crowd's own dumbness and hunger in the comparative wealth and well-being that they had—the sight of a common crowd was almost too much for the man Christ Jesus. They that suffer—there are besides you listening, and there are many, and time would fail me if I should tell of them, as it failed the apostle to tell of Gedeon, and Barak,

and the heroes, and the martyrs, and the confessors. Sin, too, has its suffering but uncrowned martyrs, and the merry world breaks its confessors fast upon the wheel. No; it is not poverty alone which constrains the crowd to the pity of Christ. Is it not daily true that He sees a multitude of souls, and has compassion on them because they faint, and are as sheep not having a shepherd?

And now, dear people, I think that some of you are expecting me to go on, and to say that if these people for whom you are so sorry would but have the courage to take one small step more all would be well. We know that they have really come a long way and believed up to a certain point; and you would have me say to them that by one or two more inward steps, if they will but take them, they might come into freedom and peace. And others among you, as you have been brought up to faith, expect me to urge upon them one, and one only, great step, that by one acceptance of Christ they may believe as they have never believed yet, and know that they are saved. I cannot, I dare not, say either of these things; I cannot speak outside my own experience and the experience that I have had of others. I have seldom seen the effort of one little step more put an end to the struggle. I have known many who have thought and said that they had taken the one great step, and made all sure, and they had not. They thought they were delivered all at once from sin, and were not. They had received the Word with joy; they endured but a little while, and in time of temptation they fell away. But what I have seen over and over again—and it is a sight of blessedness for them in whom I have seen it, and for all who were with them and near them—I have seen far more in the way of self-discipline, humbly undertaken under the healing shadow of the cross, with the guiding comfort of the Holy Ghost, soberly, steadfastly persevered in, with a resolution which would not look back nor give up for ills, and with a hope that would not let itself be quenched. I have seen people sin in all these dangers and trials and self-punishments that I have named, and in worse snares and among much worse results of their own sin; and I have seen them look to Jesus Christ and inquire what methods and what helps He had placed in His Church for entering upon that course of life, and begin to use them: and I have been amazed—rather, I should have been amazed if I had not been a believer—to see the living efficacy of faith working through discipline, and confessing sins, and steadfast

bringing sinfulness into holiness and fretful trouble into peace. I have seen their light shine more and more unto the perfect day.

Now, beloved, it is the noble and holy result of a true mission to help souls to make a new beginning, to help others to gather this hope, and to continue in earnest what was begun long since and has been fearfully idled over, and is in danger of being lost: to teach us our true position: to make us see ourselves in the reality: not to ignore or disavow the good things that God has begun in our souls, but to use them, to make us enter within the veil, urging upon the best that we know is set before us; to take up that cross of ours—we know very well what it is, and we have been saying it shone there upon the ground—to take it up: to recognize neglected precepts and readings and self-examinings and resolve and commence to lead Christians in name to be Christian in deed; to convert and also to establish; to break down but also to build up. This is scarcely the place or the audience in which time would be best used in speaking of how the mission will avail to reach some souls as by an arrow of fire in the very heart of Satan's kingdom. Doubtless that will happen to some in a very marked way, and some of you perhaps—it is especially the laity who are called to do this work—some of you, perhaps, may be the very persons whom God has chosen to step in and work this miracle for Him on others. God grant it!

But now, ere we part, I must briefly name to you three simple points of importance as to every mission, and commend them to you, and then say one word of the power which alone can make the London Mission worth anything. The three points are these: the simplest gain of a mission, and the simplest test of a mission, and the simplest application of a mission. I mean that there is one visible gain which every Christian ought to derive from the mission. There are great gains beyond, but one for every one. There is one visible test by which every one may judge of it, and one visible application which every one must make of it whose benefit from it is to be permanent.

The visible gain is this: it enables—which is the same thing as requiring—every Christian to declare himself. It is out of the question that any Christian at heart should gaze upon a mission without avowing a deep interest in it. If he does not wish it well, and that great things may come out of it, let him say he is not a Christian. The Hindoos have a ceremony which sometimes they have used in their tribes. They sift out the Christians, and every man is called on to step out and raise a vessel

of Ganges water with reverence to his forehead. The Christians, if they stand firm, refuse. They are the stronger men for their refusal, and if they show themselves to be more numerous than was expected, then the tribe for its own sake bids them remain after all unmolested: and so it falls more and more under their elevating influence. This mission is a great opportunity for our Christian men to speak out more plainly while it is a topic of the day. Their courage will make them stronger in themselves, more helpful to others.

And I will give you a test to apply to the missions of your own parishes. That mission is a failure in any parish where the clergy are not left with much more work to do, and also many more workers ready to take part with them.

And then, what must be the application to a life changed in purpose and changed in heart? It is this: take up each some simple work for Christ as for Christ—something you would not have done but for the mission, something not as a makeweight for evils indulged, some good thing not to hedge with but to render, however small it be, to Christ for Christ's sake. Pledge yourselves, at any rate, to something. And now as to the power to which a mission trusts. There is a power which throbs through and through the heart of any true mission. Have you grasped that and what it is? By what power do we in our hearts believe that any of our aims will be reached—that either the wilful sinner will be changed or the careless Christian more sincere? When such a change appears in any one, is it done slightly by the infusion of religious feeling, the sight of the closed shops, the varying services, the eloquence of the church orator, or the influence of his character? Within, in your honest judgment, I ask you, is that step gained by the moral influence of the best part of the people around the rest? That explanation satisfies the ordinary mind, but never satisfied the accurate observer of what happens: it is contradicted by every inward experience of those who go through these changes, whether rapidly or slowly. Nothing can explain them but the plain teaching of Christ, which says that it is a power not residing in human nature—power exerted directly by God with laws as real and as universal as Nature's laws. Whether this power is miraculous or natural, or supernatural, is a [illegible] which may be settled some other time: but unless it be acknowledged as God's gift, special and real, there is no spiritual result obtainable or obtainable. When the Lord first began to reveal the mysteries of His

presence. He gathered multitudes, whom He healed of all sickness and infirmity. When He had done this for a while, and convinced all that there was an unknown power working through Him, in Him, He then began to forgive the sins of men. He told them that He had power to forgive. They could not such a blessing as well they might; and they glorified God that had given such power to men. Next He sent out His apostles on their first mission, and He gave them a power like His own to cast out evil spirits and to heal. After that He gave to His Church the power to forgive sins themselves. I am not speaking of mediæval power or any controverted thing of that sort; I want to deal only with the broadest facts of history simply as facts. He told His gathered disciples, apostles or others—some, perhaps—that in His Church there should dwell the power of His risen. Then again, just before His ascension, He told them that all power was given to Him in heaven and earth, and that therefore, because of His power, they were to make disciples of all nations. Now, why that "therefore"? What is the connecting link between His power and their teaching? He supplies it. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. I am the power, and I am with you. Therefore, call, invite, teach, baptize, bless, for human nature itself, for I, with all My power, am among you."

Lastly, He bade them take a quiet ten days of waiting and preparation until from on high the power should come to them; and it came; and the first fruits of it was the amazing response to the first mission sermon preached by St. Peter. Of course, as in all His teaching, He uses every capacity, every influence we have or know of; but He fills them with power. Now, that is the central point of Christianity as a doctrine; that is the secret of the Christian Church and its work, and its advance; and this is the secret of any and every real mission. If I am not to believe and expect that power, Divine Power working like the powers of nature—to expect that it shall be specially added to our services and teachings, confidences, gatherings in rooms or in church, not springing out of them, not generated by them—I am not to believe that, I must then either disbelieve the record of Christ's language, which is as historical and more historical than any language of any man that has come down to us, or I must believe that there is a great gulf fixed between His life and our work. But I never can believe this, for I see through all Church history and Christian biography, and the lives of men and women that I know, I see that power at work, not half enough taken into account by even

Christian writers, but plainly overcoming the evils of the very men who were carrying on this work for lower ends than His, sometimes making it positively marvellous that His Church could survive such wretched handling; and yet breaking out with such intensity of effect, like those of the first days, wherever there arose masters and teachers who committed themselves wholly to its influence, and who relied upon the sincerity and the certain knowledge with which He spoke when He said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The world has always had cause to rejoice when the Church worked on in her own true spirit. The world has often left with the Church to persuade her to adopt the world's own recognized methods; and great then have been its disappointments and lasting have been its revenges, if the Church has yielded to its persuasions. In the faith of that promise, and in the vast assurances we have that it has been kept, we enter upon this mission: first repent yourselves—repent of the sin that is even now keeping you back from Him—repent of the weak ways in which you have conformed to the world when in your heart of hearts you were wishing to be Christ's, repent of that which has been quite visible in you all the time that you thought it was hidden—it has been keeping back honest non-believers from caring to be Christians after such as are accepted among us.

And then, secondly, intercede. Whoever has the least faith that God hears the cry of humanity, that man's cry has power already to enter into and to become one of the world's forces in God—that man hears to-day the cry from Egypt, "Pray for us!" and he prays. Let it quicken him to prayer also for our spiritual Egypt, and to an assurance that if he hears, God will also hear. And, thirdly, fling yourself heart and soul upon that promise of power. Believe that He will send it on all the workers of your parishes; ask for it believingly; believe that He will give a quickening portion of His living spirit to each purified and humble heart of the disciples—power not to earn the reputation but to live the inner life of a Christian, to carry comfort of the spiritual order somewhither, to strike warmth into some coldness, light into some darkness, strength into some weakness in the world. Only let these blessings be freely asked and confidently expected, and they will be largely obtained; and what shall we then see but the saving of the harvest—the saving of the harvest when skies are gloomiest and winds bleakest, the saving of the harvest even out of the jaws of winter—ay, the saving of the harvest of God?

THE DREAM OF HUMANITY.

BY THE RT. REV. W. BOYD-CARPENTER,

LORD BISHOP OF RIPON.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, June 29, 1884.

DANIEL ii. 3.

"I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream."

THERE is no function in life which can compare for one moment to that of him who can minister to the perplexities of his fellow-men, and the position which a prophet held in the ancient days, and the position which prophets hold in these days is, in this respect, the highest of all, because their function is to minister to the perplexities of human kind.

the patience and take the pains to seek for it, so, I imagine, that even in the unreasonable conditions of the king we may trace a desire which is not altogether unreasoning. And we, perhaps, may feel that that ancient story is not wholly untrue, nor the effects of it wholly lost to us when we cast our mind upon our own lives, and remember how much we, too, have been haunted by some magnificent dream. When the vision of what life really was, with its deep and solemn significance, was granted to us, we, awaking with the impression of all life's business, lost the vivid force of that dream; we could not recall it, and we turned to the seers about us — we are surrounded by these also, and in our perplexity and in our earnest desire to revive those impressions which we felt must be for good, we naturally solicit the aid of the prophets around us. They are prepared to seek, the wise and the unwise, the weak and the strong, the false and the true, and we, haunted by the remembrance of that vision of what life's deep significance is, turn in vain to these. And yet the conditions may teach us what are the real features and the real capacities of the true prophet.

If I am not mistaken, the story suggests to us that there are two great elements which are essential [illegible] his fellow-men, the true prophet of his age. The condition which the [illegible] upon applies one of these [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] relation [illegible] the interpretation of the dream suggests [illegible] must have some knowledge of the secret sources of life. These two were just those that were vouchsafed to Daniel. The first is knowledge of human nature [illegible] in the position of those who had this somewhat unreasonable demand made upon them. Their answer to his demand was very simple and very fair. "We are perfectly ready," they said, "to interpret your dream, but our ministrations extend thus far: tell us the dream and we will tell the meaning." But the king, whose vision was elevated, perhaps, by the dream which he had experienced, began to see that he was surrounded by those who were in a large measure but charlatans, and prompted to this, he perhaps insists all the more pertinaciously on the condition. "You profess to be able to interpret my dreams. How do I know that your interpretations are true? Tell me what the dream was, and I can verify your accuracy: then I shall have a solid ground upon which to proceed to give you my faith in your interpretations." In other words

I cannot verify your interpretations, but I can verify your statement of what passed through my mind. You profess to explain my life to me, and all the destiny that awaits it; if it be in your power to do this, show, first, that you understand me, and then I will believe that you can unfold my destiny." And that, in itself, when you come to study it, is no unfair condition. It may be unreasonable in the circumstances in which it was used, but there is a vein of reason, and there is a vein of fairness in it; for when you reflect upon it, there is no power in a man to teach and to speak concerning the future, unless he has a certain knowledge of the present. The power which can fore-reach and forecast the future is largely bound up with that power which can understand the present. [illegible] the present is the man who is far the more likely to be able to forecast the future. You would not entrust your case to the doctor who had no knowledge of your symptoms. You would believe that the man, and the man only, who could read into your symptoms, would be able to track the probable development of the disease. It is the same in nature. The naturalist cannot predict a harvest except he understands the nature of the seed, and it is just in proportion as he is possessed of the power of insight that he is possessed of the power of foresight. That is taught us in the pages of history. As long as men thought, as it were, to out-manœuvre Nature, and to read her secrets by ignoring her face, they simply courted defeat. These were the astrologers, the charlatans of science; but the moment they took up the other [illegible] they could predict what would be the evolution of those laws. And if that be true in the law and order of nature, has it its counterpart in the moral order also? Place ourselves for a moment in the position of the king. Daniel comes and unfolds to him the vision. "Thou sawest this splendid vision; a colossal figure, with its golden, glittering head, its arms of silver, its loins of brass, its limbs of iron—thou sawest this figure which stood before thee in thy dream, and thou art this head of gold." What is the effect upon the man? It matters not for one moment if the particular

details of the dream are altogether accurate—he has tracked the movement of the man's mind, he has shown himself master of the play of his thoughts. That splendid vision, that noble and colossal figure, represented what had passed through the king's mind, not that night only, but every night. It had been the dream of his life, the splendor and the magnificence of his position: the glorious headship which he held over the empire which he thought his own, from the high vantage-ground of which he looked down in proud contempt upon human kind. His thoughts were read. "This is thy dream, O king—the splendor of thine empire and all that magnificent kingdom which is being built up under thy hand." The man's heart is read: his vision, and all the subtle play of his thoughts is unfolded to him. "The man that can tell me these secrets of my heart is the man into whose hand I will place my destiny and bid him point the way along the track of my life. He can understand what is the outcome of this career of mine who thus understands me." And wherever men have been in the position of prophets of their age, their strength and power has depended upon their capacity to read the minds and the play of thought of the men of their age. If they are not familiar with this life they cannot have any power to deal with the life that lies beyond. The men who stood in their day, foremost, had an intimate knowledge of human nature. When the great French preacher stood before his king and spoke of the strange wrestling which went on between the lower and higher natures, when following what was his own knowledge and his own experience, he showed that constant conflict with its ebb and flow—the better feelings now rising high, and anon crippled and cast down by the baser—the monarch felt that he was one who was holding up to view the whole play of his own heart. "I know those two men" is the acknowledgement that his heart is reached. And this was the preacher to whom he afterwards said, "When I hear other preachers I am pleased with them; when I hear you I am dissatisfied with myself." If you turn to other ages you find it true. Take, for example, what, after all, is an illustration in the same direction. This Book of God, which is, in one sense, the great preaching Book, which has gone through the world instinct and alive with many an unspoken and unpreached sermon, has found its dominion over the minds and the lives and the intelligences of men because it has always displayed itself as a book well read in the deeps of human nature. "I say," said one, rising from the perusal of it, "the person who wrote that Book knew me." "I believe," said

one, who was cut off only too early in his splendid and promising career, "I believe it to be God's Book because it is man's Book;" that is to say, it has such a power to fit into the needs of human kind that it vindicates its divine strength because of the very humanity of its methods. And this is what we may call the divine key to the method which God Himself has adopted in the life and pattern of Jesus Christ. He comes into our midst to be the Divine Teacher. But how does He show His right—shall I say?—to teach men what their ultimate destiny is, but by showing them that He understands them. "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee—I knew the devout aspirations of thy life," and that brings out the thought. "This Teacher understands me. Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the Judge of Israel." It is always the case, then, if you will follow it truly, that there is of necessity a power of insight if there is a power of foresight.

Sometimes we feel ourselves a little disheartened. We say that Christianity and Christian methods are out of harmony, or out of gear; they do not effect the same great results that they did in other ages. The cynic turns aside and says, "It is true your Christianity is played out, your religion effete." I say it is an unwise thing for a man to echo these doleful plaints. It may, indeed, be the rule of those who wish to discredit the truths which are always needful to the moral and spiritual growth of humanity, to preach this miserable gospel of despondency, but better far are they who, when they find that there is a slip, as it were, of the hold which the Christian Church had upon mankind, rather ask whether the fault does not lie with themselves. May it not be the case that they have lost touch with humanity, that they have failed to understand human nature as it is before them in the century in which they live; that they have allowed, so to speak, their Christian teaching to grow fossilized, and the fossilized thing has lost its life and the hands and feet of its movement, and it cannot grasp upon the heart of humanity again? Better and wiser would be he who betakes himself to the presence of God and to the study of human nature afresh. It is not in flinging truisms at the heads of people that we shall be able to reach their hearts; it is by understanding them, knowing something of the measure of their difficulties, the kind of their doubts, the way in which some of [illegible] and anxiety, and [illegible] if you will have it, make, as it

Friend, Christ, their Father was withdrawn. The voice which soothed must be silent, and the eye which gladdened must be glazed, and the hand which blessed must be stiffened in death. Christ lay buried—lost for ever, as it would seem to them. What joy, what strength, what comfort could they have henceforth in life? They would stake their whole on Christ, and Christ has failed them. Surely, never was orphanhood more helpless, more hopeless than the orphanhood of these poor Galileans. It was to prepare them for this terrible trial that the promise in the text was given. He must go; but another shall come. They should not be without a teacher, a guide; one Advocate, one Comforter would be withdrawn, but another would take His place. There would be a friend still, an adviser ever near, to take them by the hand, to whisper into their ears, to prepare, to instruct, to protect, to fortify, to guide them into all truth. Another comforter. Yes, and yet not another. There would not be less of Christ, but more of Christ, when Christ was gone. This is the spiritual paradox which is assured to the disciples by the promise in the text: "He shall take of Mine, and show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine; therefore, said I, He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." Another, and yet not another. It was not Christ supplanted, not Christ superseded, not Christ eclipsed and quenched, but a larger, higher, purer, more abundant Christ with whom henceforth they should live. It was not now a Christ who might be speaking at one moment and the next moment might be hushed, but a Christ whose tongue was ever articulate and ever audible—Christ vocal even in His very silence. It was not now a Christ who was seen at one moment and the next was concealed from view by some infinite obstacle, but a Christ whose visit no darkness could hide, and whose touch no distance could detain. It was not a Christ of now and then, not a Christ of here and there, but a Christ of every moment and every place—a Christ as permeating as the Spirit is permeating. "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." "Lo, I am with you alway! I am with you even to the end of the world." He is not lost, then. This is the promise which Christ gives to His disciples on the eve of His departure, to console them for their loss. His departure was more than necessary. It was even expedient, it was even advantageous for them that He should go. Did not the Saviour say this? Nothing would have seemed more improbable in the anticipation

than that the death of Christ should have produced the effect it did produce in His disciples. We should have predicted weakness, depression, misery, scepticism, apostacy, despair; and yet what was the actual result? Why, all at once they appear before us as changed men. All at once they shake off meaner hopes; all at once their nerves are fortified, are lifted into a higher region. On the eve of the catastrophe they are hesitating, timid, sense-bound, narrow in their ideas. They are, we might almost say, "of the earth earthy." And on the morrow they are strong, steadfast, courageous, endowed with a new spiritual faculty which opens unto them the very salvation of salvation. Hitherto they have known Christ after the flesh. Henceforth they will know Him so no more. To know Christ after the flesh! What would we not have given to have known Him after the flesh? What a source of strength it would have been to us, we imagine, just to have listened to one of those parables spoken by His own lips; just to have witnessed one of those miracles of healing wrought by His own hand; just to have looked one moment on Him, as He stood erect in the judgment-hall, or bleeding on the cross. But no! It was expedient for us, it was expedient for the first disciples that He should go away. It was expedient for us; otherwise the Spirit could not come. To know Christ after the flesh! Did not the disciples know Him after the flesh, and did they not forsake Him? Did not Thomas who doubted, and Peter who denied, know Him after the flesh? Did not the Jewish mob which hooted and reviled, and the Roman soldiers who scourged, know Him after the flesh? What security was this knowledge after the flesh against unbelief, against blasphemy, against apostacy, against rebellion? Seeing, it is said, is believing. Yes, and hearing, too. But it is the seeing of the spiritual eye and the hearing of the spiritual ear—the eye that beheld the heavens open and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God; the hearing by the ear when He was called into paradise, "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." To know Christ after the flesh! Why should we desire to know Him after the flesh? It was just to unteach the disciples themselves, whose knowledge was only after the flesh, that Christ went away, because so long as they were possessed of this knowledge, the Paraclete could not come, could not take up His abode in their faith. Thus, this is the work of the Spirit, as described by our Lord, in the text, to us, as to the disciples of

old. The Spirit offers not less of Christ, but more of Christ; for in the place of the Christ who walked on the shores of the Galilean lake, who sat on the brink of the Samaritan well, and shed tears over the doomed city—instead of such a Christ we have a Christ who is ever present to us; a Christ of all times and all places; a Christ who traverses the universe—an Omnipotent Christ. Look at the explanation which our Lord Himself gave to the Prophets: "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." How so? Why of Christ, and Christ only? Has the spirit nothing else to teach us? Hear what follows: "All things *all things* that the Father hath are Mine; therefore, said I unto you, He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you." All things! Yes; all history, all science, all aggregation of truth in whatever domain, and wherever land it may be. "Think you," He seems to say—"think you that My teaching is confined to a few paltry miracles wrought in Galilee? The universe itself is My miracle. Think you My words are restricted to a few short precepts uttered to the Jews?" We make foolish distinctions. We imagine, we erect a barrier within which we would confine the Christ of our own imagination; but the Christ of Christ's own teaching overleaps all such barriers of ours. We are careful to distinguish between knowledge and revealed religion. We separate Christ from the former and we relegate Him to the latter; but the Christ of Christ's own teaching is the Eternal Word, through whom the Father speaks. We draw the rigid lines of demarcation between science and theology, between religion and language, but the Christ of the Bible is the Word of the Father not less in science and language than in religion and theology. We have our distinctions between the secular and the spiritual, as if the two were antagonistic. We must not use a saying of Christ, as if it taught that our duty to Cæsar was something quite apart from our duty to God; as if, forsooth, it were possible for us to have any moral obligation to any man, or body of men, to any child, which was not also an obligation to God in Christ. But the Christ of the Gospel claims sovereignty over all alike—over that which we call secular not less than that which we call spiritual. "All things *all things*—that the Father hath are Mine; therefore, I say, He shall take of Mine and show it unto you." We speak sometimes of the revelations. Yes: revelations, indeed, not merely of inanimate processes, not merely of blind laws, but revelations of the eternal world, of the Eternal Son through

whom the Father works. Therefore, as Christians, we are bound to look upon these as Christ. Therefore, if we are true to our heavenly schooling, the Spirit will take up these and show them unto us. "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." Are we diligent students of the lessons of history? Do we delight to trace the progress of the human race from the first dawn of civilization to its noonday blaze? to disclose the obscure past of the great nations of the earth? to mark the development of the forms of government? to follow the ever-broadening range of intellectual endowment the stream of human [illegible] slowly down with the force of ages? Then let us see the kingdom of Christ not less in the progress of history than in the laws of science. He was in the world, and the world knew Him not. He was the true Light that lighteth every man—the Light ever brighter and clearer till it attained its full glory at length in the Incarnation. Therefore, the school of history is also the school of the Holy Spirit, for it is the setting forth of Christ. "He that hath eyes to see, let him see." "He shall take of Mine." If you have traced Christ's footprints in the processes of Nature; if you have heard Christ's voice in the teachings of history—then, surely, you will not fail to see and hear Him in your own domestic and social relations. That pure affection which has been to you a fountain of benediction; that friendship which has been the crowning glory of your life—can you think of it apart from Christ? If you do not find Christ here, assuredly you will seek Him in vain elsewhere. What was that truthfulness, that purity, that unselfishness, that devotion which attracted you but the broken light of the Great Light, a reflected ray from the Central Sun Himself? Yes, the Spirit took of Christ and showed it to you when through that affection, through that friendship, He held up to you the nobler, because a more God-like, idea of life. "He shall take of Mine." "He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you." Last and chiefest, for the crown of all these—these rays through forest and mountain—of all other lessons, He shall set before you the full Sun. He shall teach you the lesson of Incarnation. He shall show unto your soul the tremendous importance of that statement which comes from your lips as time after time you repeat your creed: "He was made Man." He shall [illegible] the Passion. He shall remind you by [illegible] of the [illegible] which is [illegible] upon you. Look—yes, look,

and think, and think—of the body of that Word till the love of Christ shall constrain your whole being, shall bind you hand and foot, and lead you captive to the will of God. He shall teach you the lesson of the Resurrection, emancipating, purifying, strengthening, exalting, till He makes you conformable thereunto. Then you will rise from the sepulchre in which you have lain many days, will breathe the pure air of God's presence once more, will sit at meat when you are risen; while, though in the world, you will be no longer of the world; notwithstanding all disabilities and weaknesses, you will live—live even now as faithful citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is righteousness and bliss, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. FRASER,

BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

Preached in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, Sunday Morning, June 28.

EPH. iv. 12.

"For the work of the ministry."

AND it is because of the help which it renders to this work of the ministry that I have undertaken to plead the cause, which I shall do later on rather more fully, of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, which was established fifty years ago, and is keeping its jubilee this year.

You probably all remember, more or less accurately, the grand yet simple passage of which the words which I have chosen for my text form a part; and yet, perhaps, it may be as well that I should read them over rapidly to you. The apostle is speaking of the ascension of Christ, and the gifts which, from His throne at the Father's right hand, He sent down to endow His visible earthly Church withal. "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Every one must feel the grandeur of the passage, and every one must also

recognize that the grandeur consists in its perfect and unique simplicity. Men imbubed with the desire of reviving the mediæval, rather than the primitive, idea will ask, "Where is the priest?"—the power of the keys, the great organization that is to step in between the soul and Christ, and, if not renew, at least represent the great sacrifice which He offered once for all for the sins of the world, of which we may be reminded, but which can never be renewed, or represented. Some of you, I dare say, as I did two years ago, have gazed upon the great picture of a foreign artist which represents the last dread scene on Calvary, when all was finished; or some of you may have been to Ammergau, in the year of the exhibition of the Passion Play, and have come back with your own impressions from it; but in either of these productions, those that have seen them have told me (for I have not myself seen that at Ammergau) the results were not those of art—or, at least, of art visible—but of the greatest and most exquisite simplicity. Still, can, or could, these great works of art represent the great mystery of the Cross? Exquisite as works of art, what are they, what could they be, as real, transforming, spiritual powers?

At any rate, whether you desiderate it or not, whether you regretfully wish—in vain, however—that it had been there, the sacerdotal idea of the Church, with whatever it assumes as its material, visible emblems, is here, as elsewhere in St. Paul, conspicuous by its absence. The Bishop of Durham tells us in his learned and well-known essay on the Christian ministry, that the sacerdotal idea in its mediæval conception is not to be found in any portion of the New Testament Scriptures, and does not appear in any form of mature development till the age of Cyprian—that is, the middle of the third century. Paul's conception of the work of the ministry of the Christian Church, and his own exemplification of that work in his personal life, was based on other ideas. To him the Church was the great witness of a living creed based on historic facts, with all their immense, world-wide consequences—capable of converting the hearts, directing the conscience, governing the lives of men. To him the prophet, and not the priest, was its mightiest human instrument, and next to the prophets—those rare and gifted men, themselves pervaded with the idea of the fire that made the words they uttered burn, and which carried conviction to men's souls—came that humbler, but perhaps more human, and I was almost going to say more useful power, the evangelist, the pastor and teacher, the assiduous minister, the[1], perchance, within a narrower

limits, but carrying this gospel of strength and comfort to the souls of men, knowing and known of them.

And of all these titles that of pastor touches my own heart most deeply. So, apparently, did not without reason—as he could not but remember his Master's last and great command to him—did it touch the heart of Simon Peter. Strange that he should be chosen to be the founder of the great sacerdotal Church of Rome, for these are his words: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind—neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." So, again, under this image was the Christ Himself wont to set forth His own relations to His Church. He was the "good"—or, as the Greek word more properly means, the "fair"—the "beautiful Shepherd"—the Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep, who searches even for the one strayed one until He find him.

I spoke of prophets just now—of their rarity and of their gift—of men, not only of utterance, but of spiritual power, who, like David, can bow the hearts of a multitude as the heart of one man, swaying them hither and thither with a charm, a strange, mysterious potency, which we feel, though we cannot describe, and which, perhaps, we try to imitate, though we fail miserably in the attempt. Such instruments of the Spirit must always be rare. We have them in England, for there is no limitation of the gift of the apostolic age; but they could probably be counted on one's ten fingers. I am not thinking of prophets like Agabus, who seems to have had a limited power of prevision, who could foresee the famine that was coming on the land in the days of Claudius Cæsar, and who, on another occasion, [illegible] bound himself and said, "Thus shall the Jews bind the man that owneth this girdle." And the result of that ill-timed prophecy, however true, was that Luke and his companions at Cæsarea gathered round the apostle and pressed him not to go to Jerusalem; and when he refused to be guided by their counsel at last they acquiesced in what they saw was a manifest providence, and, in spite of the prophet's warning—if it was a warning—they simply said, "The will of the Lord be done."

When I speak of prophecy am I thinking of eloquence—mere eloquence—whether of the pulpit or of the platform, such as probably was possessed by Apollos? Apollos was a man of speech and "mighty in the Scriptures"; and when he had been perfectly, or at least, more perfectly instructed in the way of the Lord, the Church of Ephesus sent him over to Corinth, and there he preached with great approval. But the results of that preaching were hardly satisfactory. If he was a prophet, perchance he did not prophesy according to the full proportion of the faith; and so he seems to have become—at least, after a time—the head of what Paul calls the schism there. There was a party not content with the simple name that was given to the first Christians at Antioch. They began that miserable history of denominational Christianity, and called themselves, some by the name of Cephas, and some, forsooth, by mere name of Paul, and others by the name of Apollos. I am not thinking of that eloquence which is not altogether uncommon, and which, perhaps, in the present condition of public tastes is overvalued, and leads men to look for the secret of spiritual power where it will never be found—in declamation which is not eloquence, and in sentiment which is not feeling. Of this, perhaps, in all the churches we have enough; and men do not seem to discover what it lacks. I am not thinking of this. I am thinking of sincere sentences as many of us heard in days I heard from time to time from John Henry Newman; such as I conceive to have been (for I never heard him) the utterances of Frederick William Robertson; such as would probably have been, if his calling had been to speak to us still more exclusively of spiritual things, the utterances of him who has been called the great "Trumpet of the people"—with his knowledge of the Bible and of those whom St. Paul calls the prophets of a nation, its best poets, he's not only moulded his language, but has given him such deep an insight into the thoughts that stir the hearts of men. It was of Goethe, if I remember rightly, who said that he recognized the word of God when it found him. I am not sure that that is an adequate test of the inspiration of God's word. God's word does not always find men—at least, so it seems. But it is, perhaps, a test of the true prophet that he finds men—at any rate, men who are looking to be found. This was even a conviction of the godless Ahab when he met the great prophet Elijah, as he was going to take possession of that coveted vineyard of Jezreel. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" "Yea," saith the prophet; "I have found thee because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."

Such men seem to be rare. There were schools of the prophets in Israel; but I do not know that the great prophets of that wonderful nation—the Isaiahs and the Jeremiahs and the Ezekiels and the like—were products of the schools. You cannot turn out a prophet as by a machine, from a theological college. We all know the account that one of them—and he not the least gifted of the godly band—gives of himself. "I was no prophet," says Amos, "neither was I prophet's son; but I was a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit; and the Lord took me, even as before he took David, as I followed the flock: and He said unto me: go prophesy unto my people Israel." The spirit of the prophet, says Paul, is subject to the prophet, and capable, therefore of being misused: but though it be capable of being misused, it is, remember, the gift of God.

But high and rare, precious and, indeed, inestimable, as these gifts are—quite justifying Paul in placing prophecy as the very crown of the endowments of the Spirit, I doubt whether a much lowlier gift—a gift, too, attainable by all who will only go the right way to seek it—is not the gift more necessary and more profitable for these times. There are the twelve or fifteen thousand pastors in their several parishes, so far, and so far only, as they are doing their work faithfully, of course—that are the strength of the Church of England in this critical day. It is not merely, as some have pleaded in their behalf, that they are educated men, centres of light in a district which, without them, might soon lapse into darkness, though this is something, but it is more—that they are men with hearts and sympathies and tender care for sorrow and for affliction; that their lives are before their people's eyes, and these lives are mostly—would to God they were always and everywhere—simple, unselfish, unluxurious. And such lives are a healthy, invigorating element in the atmosphere which surrounds them:—there an atmosphere of hideous reeking vice and foulness—there an atmosphere of fashionably frivolity and of vice, less foul, perhaps, but not less really hideous.

It would not be right in such a connection, to name names, but names will rise to your lips, in North and South and East and West of this great metropolis, of men illustrating what I mean by the devotion, I may almost say the sacrifice, of their lives. And you will understand how much poorer the world would be without such lives. I will not deny that the spirit and passions of the world infect men called even with this holy calling, or, if not the men themselves, then, which is hardly less mischiev-

ous—their wives and daughters; and if the spectacle of a true man of God, to use Paul's favorite phrase, is noble and inspiring, the spectacle of a clergyman's home, when it is the abode of a self-seeking worldly spirit, is, of all spectacles, the saddest and most mischievous; for such leaven spreads far. If the pastor's tone is low that of his people can hardly be high. If Demas forsake his master through love of this present world, he will have only too many of those whom he has undertaken to teach following his example. If we, the clergy, are not witnessing for Christ, we shall be, in some form, subtle and perhaps unsuspected even by ourselves, witnessing to the power of the world, the flesh, or the devil. God deliver the Church of England from ecclesiastics of the type of the Abbé Dubois!

It is astonishing how the true pastoral character seems to win the heart of the people of England. I see it again and again in my own vast diocese—vast, not in area, but in population, with its 2,300,000 souls. It is marvellous to me, and yet most encouraging, to see how few of what the world calls "gifts" are needed to fill a church, and I may even say, to work wonders in the lives and conduct of a people. A preacher acquires the truest eloquence—in fact, without it I doubt whether any pulpit eloquence can be really true—a preacher acquires the truest eloquence by his daily contact with his flock. He then gets to know their feelings, their wants, their weaknesses, their sorrows, their trials, their temptations. You cannot get that from books; you must get it from contact with living souls. I do not think a real pastor could ever preach an uninteresting sermon. True, he may offend cultured tastes. The letter "H" may not have its full and fair treatment; there may be some provincialism of utterance; now and then the grammar may not be quite perfect; and these defects are decided drawbacks. I do not recommend anybody to cultivate them; but you shall not leave the church and your mental contact with that man without feeling that he has penetrated the true secret of spiritual power; and some new and higher aspect of life shall stand before each as, like the Chief Shepherd whom he is humbly trying to follow, he knows his sheep and is known of them. They follow him because they know his voice, and not his voice only—though that is a strange index of character, and a really harsh repellant voice is seldom found in company with a gentle winning heart—they know, not only his voice, but they know his life. He is seen in their streets; he is known in their houses; he

watches their children coming forth from their schools, and gives them a nod or a kindly tap on the head. And these things tell much farther than some of you dainty folk think they possibly can tell; and that is the power—the power of the true pastor—which I pray God to multiply a thousand-fold in the parishes of the Church of England.

Yes; I thank God for that forecasting wisdom which ordered the Church of England on the basis of parishes. I do not know whether you read a statement that was made the other day by the Bishop of Durham, in an admirable speech at a meeting of the Church Defense Institution. The passage struck me especially. He was speaking of the spiritual condition of the town of Sunderland, which, he said, was the largest town in his diocese. He spoke of some of its poorest parts, and said that in those parts which he had in his mind there had previously been five Nonconformist chapels; but the wealth, or well-to-doism, rather than the wealth, had migrated from those poor parishes, and naturally the congregational minister followed his congregation, for he had to live; and the places where these chapels stood would have been left destitute but for the parochial system of the Church of England. Those five Nonconformist chapels, said the Bishop of Durham, were missionary chapels of the Church of England. The Church must stay; the incumbent must stay; and, really, it is much more pleasant, to say the least of it, and to put it upon the lowest ground, when you are bound to stay in a place, to feel that you are doing something useful, than to lead a lazy, selfish, idle, frivolous life; and the pastor who is not consumed with the fiery energy of the evangelist will find [illegible] Well, perhaps after all, I shall make my own life more happy, and my own conscience more easy, if I try to [illegible] from which I cannot escape, and among whom God's providence has placed me."

I know the tendency to supplant the parochial principle by the congregational. I lament it as one of the worst signs of an age which, in spiritual things, has "itching ears"; but they tell me that the churches of London are almost always full, and that the people often love fables rather than truth, and fashionableness better than life.

I am asking you to-day to help the Church of England to do her parochial work more fully and more adequately by enabling one, and that the oldest of her two great missionary societies—which this year is hoping [illegible] to send forth many more laborers into this huge vineyard, such

vast regions of which are still so imperfectly cultivated. I stand before you to-day, and, appealing to your liberality, I am simply endeavoring to pay a debt to my own diocese. This society sends — or did send last year — £6,38[illegible] into my diocese, that £6,38[illegible] being rather more than a ninth of its whole income, by which means are maintained 66 curates and 21 lay agents. Its whole income of £55,[illegible] is similarly employed over the length and breadth of the land. Its grants provide 743 agents (585 clerical and 158 lay), who labor in parishes containing, in the aggregate, about five million souls. It would fain hope in this jubilee year to raise a special fund of £50,000. I trust that God will so dispose the hearts of His people to do this [illegible] me. The society's report for [illegible] with a striking quotation from the letter of an incumbent in a populous [illegible] He says: "If only the rich Christians of our land knew how much a living, loving voice is needed in such parishes as mine there would be no want of funds to supply the men." Yes, men—or, unless you choose to use the word in the sense in which the word "he" is used in an Act of Parliament, I ought, perhaps, to say living agents, men and women—are at this moment the Church's greatest and most urgent need; not merely [illegible] but men, as this clergyman says, with living, loving voices—voices not merely repeating formulæ, however reverent or ancient—as though there were a spell in the very words, though the words are not intelligible to the mind, and awaken no echo in the heart of the masses of the people, at any rate, in this nineteenth century; voices quick to respond to the great [illegible] wrought, and often [illegible] sympathy which is the one bond between soul and soul—the sweet music of Christian love discernible in their very accent. Those voices need to be heard and felt, and to work their charm, not only in the dark, unhealthy courts and alleys, but in the resorts of wealth and fashion and social influence, too, if England is to retain her Christianity: for, brethren, have any of you seriously considered the [illegible] of Christianity in England? I am not speaking of it as a refreshing individual [illegible] there is still much that is noble, unselfish, self-sacrificing, Christ-like; but as a pervading, governing, social power, characterizing and shaping the lives and thoughts of the age. Read what comes forth daily from a teeming Press. Read the contemporary literature that you find on every

drawing-room table and in every club-house library. Does this Press, does this literature proclaim the supremacy of Christian motive and Christian principle? or does it not rather indicate that both are merely respectable ancient traditions, which it is not convenient and, perhaps, not quite decent as yet openly to ridicule and put aside, but which no one dreams of regarding either as an incentive or as a restraint?

I am no prophet, nor the son of a prophet, as said of the old herdman of Tekoa, but methinks I see plainly enough there the perils that threaten society. I am not thinking of the individual position to which many of you belong; but I am thinking of the whole social structure in which we live and move. I see plainly the perils there that threaten society from the dissolution of religion in England. People talk of the evils that spring up from the dissolution of monasteries; but what are those evils compared with what would spring up from the dissolution of religion? We do not put those things down by law, as they are foolishly trying to do in France; but there is a force operating the most subtle, the most insidious and strongest of all statutory enactment. I mean the tendency of public opinion which, gradually ignoring the sanctions, and, before long, may even dare to repudiate the name of Christianity, and then shall the end come. I am not thinking of the end of the world. I do not foolishly and presumptuously antedate that great future event to which, no doubt, the whole creation moves; but I am thinking of the end of a dissolute, demoralized, degenerate society. Dissolve religion, and then shall the end come!

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

BY THE REV. DR. CHURCH,

DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, on Sunday Afternoon, August 16, 1885.

PSALM cxliii. 10.

"Teach me to do the thing which pleaseth thee, for Thou art my God; let Thy loving Spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness."

THE foundations of the religious character, which was to be perfected in the mind of Christ, were laid in faith in God and in the recognition of the supremacy of the moral law. Through ages and generations the Bible sets before us the slow growth, the unfolding and ripening of this character, till, after long preparation, and many steps, and still with many short comings, it became such that when Jesus Christ came it was able and qualified to welcome Him; to recognize, however dimly, His Divine glory; to follow Him, and, from strength to strength and grace to grace, to rise to something of His likeness. In Abraham we have seen the eyes of the soul opened to believe in God, to understand its own relation to Him; in the dispensation of Moses we have seen the discipline of the law, the acknowledgment of the paramount place of eternal moral truth. We go on from the religious character as shown in the patriarchs and under Moses to the religious character in a more advanced and developed form as exhibited in the Psalms and the Prophets.

A great step has been made, for we have the full birth of religious affection in the Psalms and of religious thought and reason in the Prophets. We see the religious character alive in every organ in the Psalms; we see it speaking, teaching, judging, warning in the Prophets. Compared with what has been shown so far, it is something new; it is a form in which we now trace, not only actions and rules and the great rudimentary elements of faith and obedience and reliance on God,

but feelings, desires, motives, reasonings. It is no longer a view from the outside. In the Psalms we see the soul in its secret workings, in all the variety and play of its many-sided and subtly-compounded nature, loving, hoping, fearing, despairing, exulting, repenting, aspiring—the soul conscious of the greatness and the sweetness of its relation to God, and penetrated by it to the very quick—longing, thirsting, gasping after the [illegible] His goodness and His mercy; awestruck before the unsearchableness of His judgments; silent before the certainty of His righteousness; opening like a flower to the sun in the presence of His light, of the immensity of His loving kindness.

And not only the affections, but the faculties and functions of the reason awaken and expand. In the Prophets the mind and thought of man receive and reflect the truth and the purposes of God. More and more illuminated by Him, the soul looks with new eyes upon the world—its disorders, its greatness, and its future; it considers the days of old and the years that are past; it has caught the deep interest of human history, and sees in it the mystery of His providence and government. In His name it passes judgment, it blesses, it condemns; with His permission and under His leading it dares, amid the darkness of sin and the present and visible power of evil, to go forward into visions of a kingdom of perfect righteousness; it recognizes the sure signs that warrant its great hopes; it ventures to foretell the conquest of the untamed Gentile world to God; and thus, to the discipline of outward precept and outward polity, has been added the inner discipline of the awakened heart and intellect, quick to understand the Father's will and to interpret its signs. "I will inform thee" is the promise—"I will inform thee and teach thee the way wherein thou shalt go. I will guide thee with Mine eye."

Surely there is nothing more wonderful in the religious history of our race than the interval between the Book of Judges and the Book of Psalms. In Judges we have the picture of a society lost in rebellion and apostacy, of a coarse and "stiff-necked people" whom the law had not curbed even to an outward obedience, whom no deliverance would bring to a better mind. It closes in shame and desolation and blood. Then we come to the Book of Psalms, not yet, of course, all that it was to be, but still, even in its earliest portions, marked with that special character which gained for the whole collection the name of the "Psalms of David." In the Book of Psalms the religious affections are full-

grown. It was the highest expression of them which the world was to see. The profoundest religious thinkers have met there what they feel after, the highest saints cannot soar higher to the eternal throne of justice and love. And where did the foundations of this lie? Where did they come from? Songs of triumph like those of Miriam and Deborah; lyrical retrospects like the songs of Moses; even thanksgivings like Hannah's, or laments like David's over Saul and Jonathan; even the mysterious Book of Job we can understand at that time; but in the Psalms the soul turns inward upon itself. And their great feature is that they are the expression of a large spiritual experience; they come straight from the heart within the heart, from the secret depths of the spirit. Where, in those rough, cruel days, did they come from—those piercing, lightning-like gleams of strange spiritual truth, those magnificent outlooks over the kingdom of God, those raptures at His presence and His glory, those wonderful disclosures of self-knowledge, those pure outpourings of the love of God? Surely here is something more than the working of the mind of man: surely they tell of higher guiding prepared for all time: surely, as we believe, they repeat the whisper of the Spirit of God and say to us: "This is the way, walk ye in it." They reflect the very light of the eternal wisdom.

In that wild time there must have been men sheltered and hidden from the tumult round them, from the provoking of all men and the strife of tongues, men humble and faithful and true, whom the world knew not, perhaps, to whom the Holy Ghost could open by degrees the wondrous things of His law, whom He taught and whose mouths he opened to teach their brethren by their own experience, and to do each his part in the great work of preparation. For "so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day; and the seed should spring up and grow—he knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." So has grown among mortal and sinful men, amid long delays and many disappointments, but yet with sure and wonderful advances, "the mind of Christ."

How do the Psalms exhibit the development of the religious character from its simpler to its more complete form? Out of a very wide subject let us take two points. First, they bring before us, in all its fulness and richness, the devotional element of the religious character. They are the

first great teachers and patterns of prayer. And they show this side of the religious character, not as hitherto, in outline, but in varied and finished detail, in all its compass and living and spontaneous force. They disclose a religious character in the same sense as now, for instance, the Litany of our Prayer Book discloses a whole range of religious character. The patriarchs and Moses, in the ancient days communed, we know, with God; but what thoughts, what desires passed through the soul of "the friend of God" under the stars of heaven—of Isaac meditating in the field at eventide, of Moses amid the storms and revelations of Sinaí and of the desert, we are not told—we are too far off to guess, and there is but scanty record of actual prayer in the Mosaic ritual as after more formal. But here, in the Psalms, we have before us what devotion is and what are the motions and affections that feed it; here we have what is its natural language. Doubtless what seems to us a sudden burst of the spirit of prayer was, in reality, the gradual growth of the long indwelling of the Holy Ghost; but so it is—the Book of Psalms comes on us, after the disappointing history of Israel, in a way which recalls the prophet's words: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break forth and streams in the desert." Yes; in that dreary waste of years, when the seed of Abraham seemed to be sinking into a mere kingdom of this world, the waters of prayer and praise broke forth as "streams in the desert." The tongue is loose to give utterance, "out of the abundance of the heart," to every mood, every feeling of the changeful human mind; from the high-hearted psalm, full all the strong [illegible] consciousness of the awakened and enlightened soul spring up unexpected and vivid words in wind-gendered utterance after generation has found [illegible] all its convictions and hopes and joys, of its own fears and distresses and perplexities and doubts, of its own confidence and its own sorrow, of its own brightest and darkest hours.

And, next, this immense variety of mood and subject and occasion, with which reverence and hope are always combined, is the further point in the work of the Book of Psalms. It is a vast step in the revealing of man to man. We know how much we owe of the knowledge of ourselves to the great dramatists, to the great lyrical poets, to the great novelists; such, in the unfolding to man of all that is really and

deeply involved in the religious character, is the place of the Book of Psalms. It shows what indeed God is to the soul in all its many moods. The soul cannot be alone without Him; he is the centre of attraction to all His creatures, the fountain and the lodestone of all love, high above the highest, yet humbling Himself "to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth"; mindful of the least, and feeding the young ravens when they cry unto Him, and opening His hand to fill all things living with plenteousness; in the excellency of His mercy shadowing beneath His wings the children of men. "They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house, and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures, as out of the river. For with Thee is the well of life, and in Thy light shall we see light." That is the God which the soul owns as its refuge and guide and shepherd. "When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up"—"the God of my life," "the God of my strength," "the help of my countenance," and "my God." No other can so draw to Him the soul of man, and for Him, the living God, the soul thirsts and longs: "Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God!" "O, how amiable are the tabernacles, thou Lord of Hosts!" "O God, Thou art my God! early will I seek Thee. My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth after Thee in a barren and dry land where no water is. Thus have I looked for Thee in holiness, that I might behold Thy power and glory. For Thy lovingkindness is better than the life itself." What a revelation is here made to man of his deepest yearnings! But even this might have misled him if there had not been joined with it, in all its certainty, the profound and immovable belief in God's righteousness. "The Lord is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works." "Thou art the God that hast no pleasure in wickedness, neither shall any evil dwell within Thee." "If I incline unto wickedness with my heart the Lord will not hear me." This is the faith which dominates the whole psalter—the soul recognizing God's righteousness as the great reality of human life. It gives meaning and substance to its shadowy workings; it is softened and solemnized as it looks abroad upon the world; it sees that righteousness set at naught by the pride and the blindness of men; sees the insolence of the cruel and the oppression of the poor and needy; sees all the shadows of human power and human pride passing away, yet is able to tarry the Lord's leisure; can say to itself: "Fret not yourself because of the ungodly";

knows that God is listening: "Thou hast heard the desires of the poor. Thou wilt prepare their heart"; can see through the mists and delusions of the present the coming of the God of judgment.

And with this faith in the soul has come the stirring and enlightening conscience. We see in the Psalms how it has learned to look into itself, how it has learned the need of the inward watch, the inward struggle, the inward self-discipline. "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me: try out my reins and my heart." "Commune with your own heart and in your chamber, and be still": how it has seen the awful vision of its own sin, how it has discovered how deeply it needs mercy and forgiveness and healing, and the Spirit from God to help it in the right path which with all its truest longings it need. "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O, cleanse Thou me from the secret faults!" "My sins are more in number than the hairs of my head." "Have mercy upon me, and of Thy great goodness cleanse me and clean heart." "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Here it is that we first hear those familiar words—words so familiar to countless generations—sincere words. And what a profound and what an original lesson! what a step is here made in the conduct of the human mind with the realities of its position.

But if the Psalms have taught us the language of penitence; if they even give merciful sanction to the bursts of fear and desolation which the weakness of human nature cannot always restrain; if thus recognize as dread passages in human experience even the possible oppressions of despair, whatever equalled before the days of Pentecost the free fun, the joy of their worship. Who can have imagined such variety, such abounding exultation at the glory, the beauty, the loving kindness, the hopes of God? When was it ever seemed to true or that—that flood of gladness, which, in spite of all interruptions of distress and fear, pours through the Book of Psalms; filling our earthly days with glory and hope, and making us feel that short and few as they are, vain and incomplete as they seem, that can be no poor and worthless life which man passes under the shadow of the wings of God, sheltered by Him whose "righteousness is like the strong mountains," and His "judgments like the great deep," who rewardeth "every man according to his works." "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison

of Thee? My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

In the Book of Psalms we see the growing up in the religious character of these high gifts of the Spirit of God—devotion, worship, self-knowledge. In the vast and diversified domain of prophecy we see other elements of that character gradually appearing, and under God's guiding and the lessons of enlarging experience, shaping themselves, distinctly and permanently. In the books of the prophets the religious reason has been awakened, the faculties which observe and compare and consider and judge, which find problems to solve and difficulties to explain; the thought which recognizes great truths and is inspired by great principles, begins to occupy itself with the doings and prospects of man, with the rise and fall of the kingdoms of this world, with the fortunes and hopes of the kingdom of God. The prophets, of course, predict, but even still more they teach; they draw out and illustrate and apply the meaning of that moral law which the ancient Church always carried in its bosom; they interpret, as they are taught of Him who inspired them, those wonderful promises of which Israel was so tenacious, and of which it so little imagined the issue. In the prophets we have the first beginning of what has never failed since—religious teaching, religion studied, meditated, reflected upon, thought out into principle and inference, explicitly brought to bear on conscience and duty, and the hopes and the welfare of society.

The great and characteristic ideas of the Psalms reappear in the Prophets; but in the Psalms they come in devotion addressed to God. The prophets turn them back upon men and expand and develop them in instruction and encouragement and rebuke. Take, for instance, the development of moral ideas in the prophet Ezekiel. He is emphatically the prophet of the moral significance of the law and of personal responsibility. He is full of the subject in its definite shape. The crimes and transgressions of his people are moral crimes; the tremendous disasters of Israel are the direct result of gross rebellion against the moral law. The burden of his teaching is that the history of nations, whether in Tyre, in Egypt, or in Jerusalem, is no chance accident—that their ruin is the natural and inevitable consequence of their disloyalty to righteousness and truth. He takes up and expands ideas which only show themselves as if in passing in the Psalms. The Psalms, for instance, give warning against

the prophet's conscience: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." "With the clean thou shalt be clean, and with the froward thou shalt show thyself froward." Its self-deceits are lighted up as with a lightning flash in that terrible text in Psalm [illegible] "But unto the ungodly said God, Why doest thou preach My law, and takest My covenant in thy mouth? Thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such an one as thyself." But Ezekiel points this more unexpectedly to a distinct statement, and what we call a doctrine, a generalized rule of the Divine government. The elders of Israel [illegible] before Him are warned, "Thou shalt speak unto them and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God—every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet to inquire of him, I, the Lord, will answer him according to the multitude of his idols." In the Psalms no one can doubt what is implied in the words: "Thou rewardest every man according to his works"—no one can doubt the assurance shown of God's acceptance of repentance; but in Ezekiel the two great doctrines of individual responsibility and the possibility and efficacy of repentance are expounded at full length and in definite cases and in distinct circumstances. "What mean ye that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" "Behold, all souls are Mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine. The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall he that is righteous be able to live thereby in the day that he sinneth." Definitely and consciously these great beliefs have taken their permanent place in the character of the religious man. His conscience felt them before; now he knows them by thought and reason.

Again, in Isaiah we see the work finished of molding the religious character—molding men into conscious servants of the All-Holy as far as it could be accomplished under the old dispensation. In Isaiah we are so occupied in the greatness and splendor of his message that we sometimes forget, as we do not forget in Jeremiah and Daniel, what is shown to us of the man himself. It is full, as no other book of the Old Testament is full, of the magnificence of our human hopes, and of the strange and [illegible] in which [illegible] and fulfilled; and yet

unrolled before us like the march of some profound and overpowering musical composition, full of all changeful and unexpected movements, full of strains of sweetness and waves of thrilling joy—now melting in tenderness and tearful with appeals the most pathetic, and ever and anon swelling with bursts of wrath and terror, but all resulting in a whole of incomparable grandeur. But we may also see in it the mirror of the man who wrote it—the mirror of him who was charged with this wonderful disclosure of the councils and the purposes of God; we may see the character, mature and many-sided, of the servant of God trained by the experience and the meditation of many generations of inspired men to the perfect freedom of willing service, to the strength and largeness of heart of an intelligent obedience. His soul is one with his awful Master; he has comprehended something of the greatness and the meaning of Him, whose is the world, and before whom the seraphim veil their faces. The coal from the altar has touched his lips, and his whole being is aflame with zeal, with sympathy for the greatest of causes—the cause of the Lord of righteousness and truth. All affections which spring from such whole-hearted loyalty, from such boundless trust, are there—confidence in the hopes of Israel, in the hopes of mankind; dauntlessness which faces all that evil can do to make the cost of victory dear by suffering; the wrath of the pure minded; the scorn of human pride; tenderness and compassion going forth to take hold of the humble and the weak. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God." In his awful [illegible] of the world, wherein is embodied all that most concerns mankind for the present and the future, and in which the tremendous severity of judgment mingles so strangely with a gracious and inexpressible sweetness which even still takes us by surprise—through all these Divinely-inspired [illegible] in the Old Testament, the personal lineaments of one who, not only by [illegible] had become fitted to be one of the company of that Redeemer whose [illegible] foretell, and in whose perfection man was to be made perfect.

So as the wisdom and goodness of our God prepared the way to build up among His creatures a special character—the character of true and deep religion. So it was of old; so it is still. The Psalms are to many

of us our daily companions. Week after week, and month after month, they are the universal language of worship in the whole Christian Church. If anything is certain in the world, it is that these Psalms will be the expression of worship till time comes to an end. The Prophets teach, inspire, and rebuke us. Nothing in the whole range of poetry, nothing in Greek or Italian art equals, to English minds and feelings, the wondrous beauty of those passages of Isaiah which enthrall the soul and ear with their inexplicable charm of thought and melody, which surprise us in our hours of joy and trouble and hope with new and unthought-of meanings, which haunt our memories with their undying music. And through all this long and varied schooling—varied in time and in method, which we trace from Abraham to the prophets—there is one thing common to all its stages, one thing always growing in depth and strength and purity—the passion for righteousness, the hatred of injury. Christian souls, on whom the ends of the world are come, who inherit the experience, the treasures, the memories of a thousand generations, shall that great passion fade and become dim out of our lives? Shall it burn less brightly and purely now, possess us more feebly and more doubtfully, now that we have seen the true image of God restored to man and in man, and perfect righteousness fulfilled in Him who has come to "take away the sins of the world," and, by the power of His Spirit, to "make all things new"?

PROGRESS.

BY THE REV. CANON LIDDON.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, April 26, 1885.

PHILIPPIANS iii. 13, 14.

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

THIS is one of the passages in which St. Paul takes his readers into his confidence and allows them to see how his public teaching was related to his own life and experience. This habit of his was due partly to an instinctive sympathy with the difficulties felt by others in understanding him, which was his characteristic, and partly to the directness and simplicity of a noble character, which is unreserved and frank where lesser men would have an eye to appearances. It was, of course, very delightful for his hearers or his readers. We all like to be allowed by a painter to see him in his studio, or to be admitted to inspect the library, the manuscripts, the notebooks of a great writer. St. Paul, in his generous way, again and again invites his readers to come before the scenes, to survey his own spiritual life. Other confidences of the same kind are his allusion to the management of his conscience, in the speech before Felix; or to his "thorn in the flesh," in his second letter to the Corinthians; or to the marks of the Lord Jesus which He bore in His body, in the Epistle to the Galatians. In the present case he had just been describing the completeness of his self-surrender to our Lord Jesus Christ: "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Would it not be natural for his Philippian readers here to think that their great master in spiritual truth must surely have already secured all that he had in view? They, no doubt, were still striving to make a few short steps in the Christian life; but the apostle who could say, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," must surely, although

here on earth, have attained the goal, have entered on the secure possession of all they, his converts, were still trying to make their own. Now, it is to correct this mistake that St. Paul states expressively that he, too, is still "looking forward," still struggling, still in the position of any one of his flock which he had taught and led. That creed and practice is and must be still the motto of us all: "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ."

"Forgetting those things that are behind, reaching forward to those things that are before." In these words in other phrases of the apostle, we seem to be listening not to the inspired writer of eighteen centuries ago, but to the watchwords of our busy modern world. The modern idea of progress—in politics, in social science, in the world of thought, of art, of education—may be properly described as a forgetting of those things that are behind, a reaching forward to those things that are before. What does this or that social or political reformer constantly impress upon us? "Forget," he says, "the things that are behind, the ideas which formed, which cramped the minds of your ancestors; forget the institutions under which you grow up, the centuries which stretch back to the dawn of your civilization, and look forward to the age which is about to open. Before you is a land of promise in which all will govern as well as be governed, in which wealth and education will be equally distributed, in which the diminished privilege of the few will secure their new birthright for the many." And what says the apostle of intellectual progress? "Forget," he, too, says, "the things that are behind, the beliefs in which you were brought up, the dogmatic atmosphere of thought that you first breathed into your childhood, that you have inherited from the past—forget the principles of Socrates, the moral literature of past years, and look forward. We are entering on a new world of experience, a new world of knowledge, of the universal rights and the human mind which has learnt so much to understand itself and to understand the universe in the days gone by, is on the eve of conquests which will throw its past achievements utterly into the shade." Indeed, my brethren, it is quite impossible to

point to any department of human thought and activity in which the idea of progress, not the less powerful because it is undefined and indefinite, has not a great and increasing empire. This powerful idea we trace everywhere around us in the outward efforts and life of man, and it has its secret and its explanation in the depths of man's nature. Man has been created with a capacity for perfection, and, as a consequence, he is always dreaming of, or aspiring towards, an ideal world which he does not yet possess. The fancy of every child is haunted, however indistinctly, by pictures of a distant future, however impossible, towards which it can must struggle. And the source of this impulse to reach forward to what is, or is supposed to be, beautiful or perfect is that He who has made us for Himself has touched that infant's soul with some ray, some impress, of His own eternal beauty. And has provoked from it a responsive movement, which thus seeks everywhere, and in everything around it, the living who thus mysteriously draws it to Himself. Even when man is wandering far away from God, the source of all that is true and good in speculations or all that is degrading in conduct, he is constantly seeking One who has set within his soul an indelible sense of His charm and His perfections, and whom, like a child that is blindfold, he feels for in quarters where He, the All-perfect, is least likely to be found.

Let us observe that this natural impatience of the present and the actual, this movement towards the unattained and the unknown, is characteristic of man. There is no reason to suppose that any lower animal is capable of it. An ideal which is beyond experience, which belongs to abstract thought, however [illegible] impels a conscious effective spirit, like that of a man, and not a mere sentient life, like that of the lower creatures. No animal is haunted by an ideal; no animal, therefore, is capable of progress. The animal lives from moment to moment, between a past which is altogether forgotten—unless some association should flash a fragment of it upon its sluggish consciousness—and a future which it cannot and does not anticipate. But man, however unworthy or degraded his ideals [illegible] consciously cherishing or pursuing them [illegible] all of the wisps which lead him through the [illegible] of the morass or the precipice where he will presently forfeit his life. Indeed, when we talk so much as we do about progress [illegible] istic of our day and civilization, it is necessary to ask two questions about

it. And, first of all, what is the subject of such progress? What is it that is progressing? Now, great numbers of persons, if they were cross-questioned as to what they meant by progress, would either have to reply, or would find out upon investigation, that they only mean, after all, improved methods of manipulating matter. You go down, for instance, to a country town, and you fall in with a friend who walks you round the place, "just to show," as he says, "how we have been getting on since you were here, five-and-twenty years ago. Look," he says, "at that street. It is twice as broad as it was, and it has been rebuilt. Come into this manufactory, and take note of that patent machine. It has enabled us to undersell all the rival firms elsewhere, and to spend a great deal of money improving the homes of our workpeople. And, then, we are now on the line of railway which brings us within five hours of London, and the telegraph has placed us in communication with all the world. We know every morning here how the money market stands in Paris and Berlin just as well as in London. Our town hall, you observe, is really a fine building. It cost an immense sum of money; but we are only waiting to profit by the experience of a few large buildings elsewhere to light it up with the electric light, and then we flatter ourselves that it will be superior to anything of the kind in this part of England. You would hardly suppose, indeed," he continues, "that this was the same place as that which you visited a quarter of a century ago. Certainly the old church is there much as it was, with the weathercock on the tower, and with the brick almshouses hard by; but in other respects everything has changed. Life here is a totally different thing from what it was. The fact is, sir, we live in an age which, beyond any preceding age of which we have record, is an age of progress."

My brethren, material and industrial progress is a blessing. We have only to cast our eyes on those countries and races to which it is denied to understand how much we owe to the "Giver of all good" for the share of it which, especially during the last half century, He has granted to us. It is a blessing, for this reason, among and above others, that, if rightly appreciated and rightly employed, it paves the way for a higher progress than itself, for a moral and a spiritual progress. It would ill become the Church of Jesus Christ to ignore all that she owes to the steamship, to the railroad, to the electric telegraph. They become, in various ways, as do the ruder courses of Nature, His messengers who "maketh the

clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind." Through them the sound of apostolic voices has gone out into all the lands and their words unto the ends of the world. But does man's progress in manipulating matter of itself do anything for the real progress of man? What is man? You say, perhaps, that he is a very accomplished and experienced animal. But is he nothing more? Do you reckon your limbs, your bodies, your brains, as, indeed, yourselves? No; the true self is beyond all these—it is beyond the material form which it measures, which it pushes about, which it treats as a very good servant or companion, but as nothing more. Man, in the inmost recesses of his being, is not anything that we can see; he is that principle which thinks, and is conscious that it thinks; which resolves, and remembers what it has resolved, what it has thought, in utter independence of the material case or instrument which it carries about with it and calls a body. This, the higher and spiritual side of man's nature, is the real seat of his being, the only part which is inaccessible to the assault of death; and a progress which is wholly outside it, and only concerned with the world of matter around it, is not, properly speaking, the progress of man. Nay, more. If material progress be unaccompanied by something higher, by moral progress, it may be bought at too dear a price; it may kill the workman in order to enrich the master; it may impoverish the blood and sap the strength of a population by the employment of very young children, and by late hours of work; it may, in the very midst of its machinery, treat man himself as a mere machine, warranted to act up to its full productive power, and to enhance its profits, but still deprived of the time and freedom that is needful for the well-being of the intelligence of the heart, of the soul; and thus it may crush out from among our artisan, or working populations all the higher elements of love and obedience and respect, and may sow widespread seeds of discontent and hatred, and make ready the way for some preacher of a general confiscation of property, who disguises the sophisms, the immoralities of his theory by parading the wrongs (alas! the undeniable wrongs) which material progress divorced from Christian motive too surely and too readily inflicts.

Certainly, my brethren, we have facts enough around us to teach us, if we will, that material progress alone does not necessarily secure the safety even of a material civilization. What more striking illustration of man's triumph over matter by combining its occult forces is to be found than in

the dynamite—the dynamite which proclaimed to us last Thursday (as it has too often of late proclaimed before) that it places whatever is most associated with what is venerable in the past or useful in the present at the mercy of any form of discontent or ill-temper that cares to express itself in acts of violence. And at this moment are not the arsenals of Europe, and of this country in particular, resounding with the din of preparation for possible war? And do not our public prints tell us daily (in view of the splendid and costly means taken to destroy) of human life on a gigantic scale which are among the most skilled triumphs of our material progress? Ah! what have these triumphs of our skill achieved, save this—that they have made the unregenerate passions of mankind more formidable than they were in ruder times, that they have endowed the tiger that is within all of us with stronger jaws and with sharper claws than he had in preceding centuries? What, it may be asked, is the gain of the material progress, if it stands alone, that has thus armed great nations to the teeth for a conflict which would probably be more widespread and ferocious than any of its predecessors, while no higher progress, it seems, is for the moment strong enough to awe the foul spirits of suspicion and revenge into the silence which becomes them, and to say to the rising tempest of human passions, "Peace, be still"?

Material progress, then—the progress of something outside man, an improved material civilization, unaccompanied by any other—is to humanity simply what a new great-coat may be to a man who has a heart disease. But what of mental progress? Surely the mind belongs to the man himself, and if it be on the highroad of improvement, may we not rightly speak of its progress as the progress of man? And we certainly live in a day when this sort of progress has made even enormous strides. We live in a day of Education Acts, of School Boards, and University Commissions, when education is a profession, and when all the apparatus of learning has a pomp and a publicity about it unknown before. And here, too, people are forgetting the things that are behind, and looking forward to the things that are before. Old subjects and methods are being more and more discarded. The dead languages are being thrown aside for special subjects, a knowledge of which may be turned to immediate account. The acquisition of useful knowledge as distinct from the training of the mental faculties seems to be the watchword of our modern education, and to rouse in its behalf widespread enthusiasm.

Whether it is all real progress from a worse to a better educational method, may, perhaps, be doubted. A man who had as much as any one to do with destroying the older educational methods of our oldest University thus describes the result: "The sudden withdrawal, he says, "of all reverence for the past has generated a type of intellect which is not only offensive to taste, but is unsound as training. The young Oxford which our present system tends to turn out has a mental tone which cannot be regarded with complacency by anyone who judges an education not by its programme, but by its pupils. Our young men are not trained; they are only filled with propositions, of which they have never learned the inductive basis, from showy lectures, from manuals, from attractive periodicals. The youth is puffed up [illegible] really-made notions on every conceivable subject, and more or rather which he is taught to regard as real knowledge. Swollen with its puffy and unwholesome diet, he goes forth into the world regarding himself, like the infant in the nursery, as the center of all things, the measure of the universe." It is not for me to discuss the exact measure of truth which there may, or may not be, in the cynical picture thus drawn by the late Mr. Pattison. It cannot, at any rate, be said to be inspired by any reactionary sympathies, and it seems to show, at least, as much as this, that all change and movement in the [illegible] cannot be described as progress. But there is a much deeper question to be asked and answered before we can be sure that any improvements in education, in wider popularisation of knowledge, really deserves the name.

My brethren, we have seen that a merely material progress is apt to fail becauses it ignores the true seat of man's being; because it is only progress in the manipulation of surrounding matter instead of progressive improvement of the man himself. And a merely mental progress is not less surely [illegible] because it ignores the true greatness of man's being, his true end, his true destiny. Why are we here? What are we looking forward to? What are we living for? If it be answered that all does end at death, then only such sort of knowledge as makes the few years of our existence more tolerable than they would be without it is worth accumulating, and progress in such accumulation is true progress. But if there be a hereafter, then most assuredly all knowledge that reveals the nature of that hereafter, and that enables us to prepare for it, is of the very greatest value, and we make progress in the proportion in which we master and act upon

such knowledge. Half a century ago there was a "Society for Promoting Useful Knowledge." It was understood to be, in some sense, at least, opposed to the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." The title assumed that there was some sort of contrast between Christianity and utility; just as though Christianity belonged to an ideal or fancy world, while knowledge that was useful would confine itself to subjects belonging to the present scene of human life. There is no reason, so far as I know, to think that all, or most, of the founders of the "Useful Knowledge" society" denied the existence of a future life. But, like those who do not disbelieve it, they used public language which might seem to imply that they did. To call knowledge which bears upon this life only, exclusively or eminently, useful knowledge is to beg a very large question. If there be a future world, a heaven and a hell, any knowledge which enables us to prepare for that world is in the highest sense useful knowledge, much more useful than that which only enables us to make the most of this passing world of sense and time. No manual of history, or geography, or grammar, or technical knowledge or any subject you like, is, in reality, so deserving of the title of useful knowledge as is the New Testament, since the New Testament takes account of man's real destiny and being, whereas these manuals, excellent in their way, provide only for a fragment of a very transient phase of man's present needs and experience. This, then, apparently obliges us to think that much of what is called the intellectual progress of our time is not real human progress. It is for this reason, it does not do justice to man as a being who does not cease to exist at death. If children were taught at a school only such subjects as they could understand, up to the age of twelve or fourteen, on the supposition, it might be entertained, that they would never grow older, or would never grow up, it would not be, to say the least, a perfect education. And of a being who is to live through eternity is to learn while here only the subjects which will be useful to him during the fifty, or sixty, or eighty, or ninety years of time, such an education is not entitled to the name of progressive education, since it fails altogether to satisfy the true conditions and requirements of human existence. The true progress of man, then, is the progress of man himself, and not of something outside man, such as the material civilization which encases his life; and it is the progress of man as man—that is to say, of a being who, once being in existence, lives for ever. This is a progress which

embraces all man's faculties, his understanding no less than his heart, and his conscience, and his will, the understanding pursuing an increasing knowledge of the highest truth, while the heart and the will are devoted to the attainment of the highest good; for the true mental progress of man is inseparable from his moral progress. A man may be very well informed in certain departments of information, very clever, very acute, without being a good man. But for true mental progress, for comprehensive and balanced estimate of truth as a whole, principle (that is to say, thought formulated by goodness) is necessary. Without goodness, the understanding instinctively turns away its gaze from all truths, however true they may be, that have a moral bearing or obligation. When once the soul has deliberately rejected goodness it has broken the link which joined it, I do not say to cleverness, but, certainly, to truth. The love of truth and the love of goodness go hand in hand. You cannot impair your rectitude of action without injuring the clearness of your mental vision; you cannot do a deliberate wrong to virtue without discovering that much has been lost in that balance and that harmony which is essential to the due appreciation of truth. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God" is a principle of the widest application.

Man's true progress, then, is progress in that which belongs to his real self, and which will, therefore, survive the shock of death. It is such as St. Peter is thinking of when he bids his correspondents "Add to their faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." It is this progress which is in St. Paul's eye when he points the Ephesians to a time when we may "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," when "we may grow up unto Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." It is commanded by our Lord in such momentous sayings as "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." It is progress in faith, in hope, in love, in humility, in truthfulness, in courage, in purity; it means more prayer, more self-mastery, more repression of self, more care, more thought for others. These things are the progress of the very inmost man himself; they imply not merely mental, but moral habits; they will last, every one of them, beyond death.

There are two enemies to this the real progress of man; one is a commonplace but dangerous enemy—the vice of spiritual sloth. It is not so much an affair of temperament as a matter of motive. Sloth is only possible when there is no motive power at work in the soul, such as is the love of God. The love of God is the principle of spiritual progress. It is always dissatisfied with past or present attainments; it is always looking forward to something that has not yet been reached. When the faculties of the soul are not forced forward by this heavenly influence, depend upon it they do not lie idle with impunity. The field which is not tilled is soon covered with weeds and thistles. The devil, says an old writer, is like those birds who quickly build their nests in a disused windmill. The idle wings of a slothful soul are certain to attract him. Spiritual force which is not turned to account is like a fur coat laid up in a cupboard; it is certain before long to breed some sort of vermin, in the moral sense. And the other enemy to spiritual progress is an erroneous idea of being in some position of spiritual privilege which makes progress, or effort, unnecessary. This is sometimes, but very mistakenly, supposed to be the result of belief in the grace of baptism. That grace is a seed deposited in the soul, and requiring cultivation; it is a gift which is not given unconditionally; it may be forfeited, may be sinned away. The knowledge that we are in possession of an endowment which is capable, indeed, of the highest development, but which may, through carelessness, be lost, is surely a stimulus to effort; it is not a moral soporific.

On the other hand, there is a state of mind to which this objection does apply—that of persons who having experienced, through God's mercy, a great spiritual change, feel that everything has been done for them by God's grace, and think that they do a sort of homage to His mercy in making no personal effort of themselves. The mottoes of this state of mind are such as the following:—"If a man is saved, what can he desire more?" "If the work of salvation is God's work, can man improve upon it by any efforts of his own?" And those who use this language forget two other sayings. One is St. Paul's, to the effect that "Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, that He might purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous"—mark that—"zealous of good works." And the other is St. Augustine's, "God, who has not saved us by ourselves, will not save us without ourselves." In other words, we cannot contribute merit,

and we may not safely refuse co-operation. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves—it is the gift of God"; and yet "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

The truth is, we ought always to be making progress, since not to be going forward is to be losing ground. Many a man in this city measures year by year, and with satisfaction, the increase of his income. Many men, I hope and think, take account of their mental growth at fixed periods of time. Why should we not be equally keen about our spiritual progress? Are you and I making any such progress? Are we standing still? Are we losing ground? What were our habits one year ago in respect to prayer, communions, study of Scripture, examination of conscience? What are they now? What had we achieved in the way of discipline of temper, control of tongue, control of the thoughts, general and true self-mastery? What is the case now? With what degree of welcome did we then look forward to death and to all that lies beyond death; and how is it now? In this way we may take stock of our real acquirements, and find out how far we are "forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward to those that are before." These are the twin secrets of true advance in our highest life as man: "Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward to those things that are before." The past may have been in the eyes of others creditable and meritorious; woe to us if we think so! Our safety is to dwell only on so much of it as [illegible] But to the future, the things that are before, the crown yet to be won, the thoughts yet to be conquered, the steeper paths, the more threatening precipices which confront us as we reach (if we do reach) the summit—let us look forward; especially, with St. Paul, let us keep our eye upon the true end of life—"the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus." It lies beyond the horizon of time, beyond the necessities of this state of existence; and as we struggle towards it, it reminds us of the true greatness of our destiny and yet of our weakness if we be unassisted by our Almighty Friend. "The prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus"—it is the fixed point towards which thought and effort may always safely be directed, and each step that brings us nearer to it is a step, depend upon it, on the true road of progress, since it is a step towards attaining our true greatness in our eternal home.

BLESSEDNESS OF COMPLETED WORK.

BY THE REV PROF. BENJAMIN JOWETT, M.A.

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Preached in Westminster Abbey, June 28, 1885.

ST. JOHN, xix., 30.

"He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."

These words have a peculiar interest and solemnity to us, because they are supposed to be the last words of Him whom we call our Lord and Master. The agony had passed away, the end soon followed, although a short space before, Christ-like, some of those who have been partakers of His sufferings had tasted the bitterness of death, and there was a moment when He cry had been wrung from Him, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" while at another moment He poured forth the prayer more Divine than any earthquake or darkness which veiled the awful sight, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The narrative of St. John's Gospel, from which the text is taken, differs in several points from the narrative of the other Gospels, and the love of truth compels us to think that the words of Christ, and especially these last words, are differently reported by St. Luke and by St. John. When we consider the confusion and uncertainty of the scene, we shall not wonder that some spoke of our Lord as expiring with a cry (which is the record of St. Matthew); while others (as in St. Luke's Gospel) reported Him to have said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and others, again, describe Him as pouring forth His last breath in the words: "It is finished." Ingenious writers have attempted to harmonize these and similar discrepancies in the Gospel narrative, but there is little wisdom in applying to Scripture a mode of reconciliation which we should not apply to an ordinary history. The thought of Christ which has filled the mind of the world has nothing to do with those microscopical inquiries respecting the composition of the Gospels which have so greatly exercised critics

for more than a century, and had better, perhaps, now be dropped when we see all that can be known about them. All the four, or rather the three narratives of the crucifixion, for that of St. Mark adds nothing of consequence to the remaining three, are extremely simple, and there is no trace in any of them that the Evangelists would have regarded the Lord as saying one thing with one part of His nature, and another with another part, or that they felt, or would have understood, the difficulties which the after reflections of theologians have introduced into the text of Scripture. What our Lord meant, or what the Evangelist meant by the words of the text, or rather by the one word "It is finished," we can only conceive in part: there is more contained in them than we easily elicit from them. Christ had always spoken of Himself as having a work to do which must be finished before He went hence. According to the tradition, which has been preserved in the Gospel of St. Luke, He was thirty years old at the commencement of His public ministry, and He continued to preach and teach for about three years, marked in the Gospel of St. John by the successive Jewish festivals; for the three first Gospels contain no indication of the length of His ministry. In this short time a great lesson had been taught; a new truth, a new idea, a new power had been imparted to man which the world was never afterwards to lose. He had opened the gate and had shown men the way to His Father and their Father, to His God and their God. He had included in His kingdom the other sheep which were not of this fold. He had been received and had been rejected of men: He had appeared to them for a moment to be anointed: One of whom the prophets had spoken, and the Son of David, the King of Israel: and then, again, He had borne the image of that other and that beloved of God, and yet seeming to be forsaken of Him: He had been deserted by the people and then by His own disciples. The most enthusiastic of them did not venture to acknowledge Him. The politic Sadducee would have remarked with satisfaction that the deceiver or troubler of the world would be no more heard of: the sect was hardly a sect and would never revive. And yet, at that hour, when the world was closing upon Him in darkness, when the consummation seemed to be further off than ever, when His own disciples had forsaken Him and fled, it might be said with truth of the work which He came into the world to accomplish—"It is finished."

Of the meaning of these words to the mind of Christ, or of the thoughts which were present to Him in that hour, we hardly like to raise the

question. Still less should we make an approach to the mind of Christ by assuming that He was loaded by the sufferings of all mankind, or by exaggerating the merely physical characteristics of the scene: for example, by meditating on His wounds, in which some of His followers living in rude ages of the Christian Church have fancied they could immure Him, or again by drawing pictures of the Crucifixion, which, indeed, has given birth to many noble works of art. But into this solemn scene we should wish to enter not with our feelings only, but with our reason, regarding the event not as a symbol having mystical meanings or pictorial effects but as an historical fact; for the real point of all is that He died for us, and that we, at this day, still feel the power of the Cross working in us. But when we try to imagine Him as He was in this world, not to dwell on the fragmentary character of the accounts of His life which have been preserved to us in the Gospel, we feel that He was a Being so different from us, so much above the ordinary motives and impulses of man, that we cannot adequately represent either His words or His acts; we cannot conceive Him in the mind's eye in the same sense that we can conceive Peter, or Paul, or John. What were His feelings at this hour? Was He thinking of the years which He had spent under the roof of His parents when He was subject to them, as the narrative tells us, in His home by the Sea of Galilee, as many have had the recollections of their early life rush back upon them at the time of death? Or was He thinking of her, through whose soul a sharp sword had passed, who, with dimmed eyes, was watching from a distance the cruel death of her only Son? Or, perhaps, of the fickleness of mankind, on which, now that in the words of St. John, He was lifted up from the earth, He seemed to look down as being out of the reach either of their enmity or their favor.

Such might have been the natural feeling of an ordinarily good man when he was casting aside his life as a trifle which he hardly cared to save. But to Christ, we shall do well to attribute thoughts higher and deeper still—such thoughts as we find expressed in the later chapters of St. John: "Father, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do"; "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in Me"; "I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee"; "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you;" "I will send you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, and He shall testify of me"; and yet, also, as

we read in the Gospel of St. Matthew, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not My will, but Thine be done." In such a spirit, and with such thoughts passing through His soul, Christ died, and in such a spirit, as far as He is imitable by us, we pray that we may die, if it should please God to take us to Himself not in peaceful slumber, but amid sharp and bitter pains.

There have been other great works in the world (though we do not compare them with the work of Christ) to which the words on the text might be properly applied: "It is finished." A great man undertakes some cause. He begins with the world against him, and ends with the world on his side—he has lived to see the principle to which his soul was devoted established beyond dispute. He has wrestled with the stream of current, and has been borne on the deeper tide of human force, and as he passes out of life he is conscious that he has a future with him. Such works there have been in this and other ages and countries which individuals have been allowed to complete in a single lifetime. The writing of a history which remains to be an everlasting possession; the discovery of a new scientific method; the reformation of a religion; the consolidation of an empire; the completion of a beneficent scheme of policy; the creation of a new school of philosophy; the revelation of an unknown kingdom of Nature—these things have been perfected by the almost superhuman power of a single man. The great inventor may live to see the face of the country changed by some mechanism or contrivance which was slumbering in his own mind forty or fifty years ago. What singular thoughts must arise in the minds of such men at the close of life! and we should like to think of them as offering up their work to God, saying in a sense, that ordinary men cannot say, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." But whether they put the thought into words or not, or were conscious of any such feeling in looking back upon their past years, still, if their work was disinterested, if they were not living only for gain and fame, we know that they were accepted of Him; for the Gospel does not bid us to exclude any who seem in any degree to have the Spirit of Christ, and least of all the great benefactors of mankind.

But these examples are above the level of humanity, and we want to return to our daily work and life. Most of us would like to have done something before we grow old and die. If there could only be in our

lives that of which we could say, "It is finished." How persons, comparatively, have any idea of the work which they are called into the world to perform, or any settled plan by which such a work may be accomplished; their life seems to be drifting without hardly any conscious effort on their part to direct it, and they are carried by an accustomed current to the unknown shore. They think about little things—what they eat and drink—but to the great motive of all they hardly attend. Or they have higher aspirations at times; but they have no continuity in their purpose, and their life is a series of disappointments to themselves or others.

I propose to urge upon you in this sermon the duty of regarding life as a work, which we may represent to ourselves (we like, under many figures of speech—as a web which we weave, or a house which we build, or a character which we fashion, or a poem which we write, or a tree which we plant, but which also grows—and the blessedness of having completed that work before we pass away.

Some one will speak to us, or the thought may arise in our own minds when we are beginning to set out our plans, of the shortness and uncertainty of life. That is a text upon which the preacher has often enlarged. There seems to be no time in which anything considerable could be achieved. We pass from youth to middle life, and from middle life to old age before we know where we are; and there is such a chance that we may be cut off and never finish what we are doing. Death is standing in the way, as the old Mythology fancied, envious of the fair, the good, the young. There is a strange mixture of truth and error in this sort of reflection. In one sense man is the sport of the winds and of the waves; but behind are the laws of nature, and behind all is the unchanging will of God. The truth in an unchangeable God is the strength of human nature; the feeling that we are the sport of chance, relieved sometimes by the occasional interference of Providence, is really the weakness of us. A state of the world in which we can calculate upon nothing would be a sort of chaos both in nature and in human life. Nor do we feel, either as Christians or as men, that there is anything very terrible in death: that seems to be a terror which, if we look at facts, is not felt by most men. Nor is the higher purpose of the Gospel to take away the fear of death, but to introduce us to a higher life.

I would rather consider this subject from another point of view; it is quite as religious and more practical, and has not been often dwelt upon in

sermons—I mean the comparative certainty of human life. We all know that the probable duration of our lives may be easily calculated, and is the basis of various dealings between man and man. We have not so long to live at thirty as we have at twenty, or at sixty as we have at fifty. Time becomes more and more valuable to us, and we fear that the night may overtake us sooner than we supposed. These may be truisms, but they are truisms which, if heartily recognized, exercise a great influence on the formation of men's characters. The commonplace fact which all of us know—namely, that we have probably at any age half as many years to live as we fall short of ninety (so they now tell us) may suggest little or nothing to some minds; but others may be aroused by such reflections to think that life has a definite period and a definite work; and will receive a new impulse to devote themselves to the good of their fellow-men, or to the cause of truth.

And as a man gets on in life, the feeling that his time is short should quicken him in the service of God. Every one has felt the satisfaction of having done something. To have carried through some business which we were disposed to put off; to have paid a debt; to have written a book; even to have answered a letter will be a considerable pleasure to us. There is a peace of mind to a man when he is dying in knowing that he has set his life in order, and left none of the common duties of life unfulfilled. To have contrived or executed anything, or to have acquired any sort of knowledge thoroughly and exhaustively; to have brought order out of disorder, harmony out of difference; to have seen an institution grow under our hands, has been a great source of happiness to many of us; we like to have done something, not to be always *about to do* something. "Take me not away in the midst of mine age" is a natural prayer.

These are a few illustrations or instances which may help us to realize that other thought of a completed life, which I will now endeavor to consider under two heads, showing first that the plan must be adapted to our characters and circumstances; secondly, that the work must be "done unto the Lord, and not unto men." There is a sense in which people cannot go against their own natures; they can resist the evil of them, but they cannot with any advantage try to eradicate them; they must supplement rather than extirpate their original qualities. This is what we mean by a man feeling his own deficiencies, which is a very expressive and true

mode of speaking. Until he knows himself as he is in his own weakness and in his strength, he will be always making mistakes, stumbling at the threshold of life, stumbling on in later life. Happy if at last he can learn to see himself as others see him. And, therefore, in fixing on a plan of life a man must consider his own character, and limit himself by that. There are some things which he can do easily, there are some things which he can do with an effort, there are other things which he knows himself he can do, but which he cannot do at all. For example, he may fancy that he [illegible] has no sense either of language or of metre. The art is to start from what he is that he may become something more, to be equal to the present while attempting things beyond.

And he must not dissipate himself by trying to do too many things. One work, or one kind of work, is enough for the life of most men; he is not good for much who is good for everything—for everything but his [illegible]. I might illustrate the difference between the efficient and inefficient life in the case of students, whether of the younger or more advanced class. One man has no definite idea of what he is going to learn, or of what he knows. He learns by chance and indistinctly that there are great gaps in his knowledge. With no book, or subject, or part of a subject, can he be said to have an accurate acquaintance. He has never grasped or realized anything; he has no exact [illegible] them; he is the *dilettante*, not the real student. And there are *dilettantes* in life as well as in study; in business as well as in books. Whereas another man has at once presented to his mind, or immediately framed, an outline of what he means to learn; he divides the whole into parts; he makes every part throw light on every other; he examines himself to see whether he has his facts really under control; he has a hold on his subject, and is able to say of this book, or that part of his subject, that he knows and remembers and can use his knowledge.

And in after-life there is the same kind of difference between the false and the real student, between the fortunate and the unfortunate worker. Two men appear to start with equal abilities and attainments, and one of them does so much, and in a short time, and the other does so little, and in a long time. The great promise of youth is constantly in painful con-[illegible] the feeble performance of later years. Standing upon the

brink of the grave, there are many who must acknowledge that, after all, their life has been a failure. Many reasons might be given for these disappointments—the narrowness of mind which is incapable of a free or fair study of any department of knowledge; the weakness of character, which flourishes in a hothouse, but which is killed in the open air, and shrinks from the blast of the world; the want of a noble aim, which raises men above envy, or personality, or party, upon which so much of the strength of life seems to be wasted. Then, again, there are mistakes that men make in a life of study as in other things. They go on reading and never writing, until their acquisitions have become altogether out of proportion to their power of using them, or their taste may be so fastidious, their grasp of mind so great, that no considerable work could ever be executed on the scale or with the perfection which they proposed. Most of us, who have arrived at middle life, have had dreams in the days of our youth, of the books we should read, and the languages which we should learn, and the studies which we should pursue. Such dreams are always being renewed in the present generation as in the last. And if there is anyone here present who entertains this sort of aspiration I would not discourage him, but would counsel him to make what life and more difficult of attainment far than this many-sided cultivation is the force of character which carries to its conclusion any single work. But few of us are students, and there are works of the most different kinds which have to be performed often in silence by women as well as men, by the old as well as by the young. There is the care of a school, or parish, or college, or of the household and of the servants of the house, or of the business and the persons employed by us, in which such great results may be produced by a firm will and an intelligent purpose extending over many years. Besides the engagements of society, besides the blessings of family life, let us make some other interest, if we can, which may bind our days together with a golden thread, and survive the changes which the lapse of years is making. To such works we should give not only the chance thoughts or moments of our life, not only the kindly feelings which naturally arise in the minds of humble persons towards those around them—we should look forward a little and scheme, if you will, for the good of others, and not merely for our own narrow or selfish purposes. Very much may be accomplished, as in nature so in art, even by slender powers when we make time the lever with which we work.

Then again there may be works of the most private sort—trials of duty and affection, which are left to us. The reconciliation of the divisions of a family, the payment of debts, the support of others, the care of those who cannot take care of themselves—it brings a man great peace at the last to have fulfilled all these trusts, not to have the words "Too late" ringing in his ears. There are many lifelong works of this kind among the poor. Many of us have known of servants who have devoted themselves to the bringing up of a family, the very type of good sense and high principle in a limited sphere, faithful in good or evil fortune, the pillar, the example of the house in which they live. They, too, have finished the work which was given to them, and have gone home and taken their wages. And we sometimes wish that we in our sphere of life, could offer up to God anything so good as that faithful service.

Secondly, and lastly, we must think of this work, of whatever kind, as the work of God upon earth, which is carried on independently of us, and in which we are allowed to bear a part. It wonderfully clears a man's head and simplifies his life when he has learned to rest, not on himself, but on God. When he sees his daily work with a kind of intensity in the light of God's presence, he is not divided between this world and another, or trying to make the best of both; he has one single question which he puts to himself, one aim which he is seeking to fulfill—the will of God; he wants to know what is true, or right, or good in the sight of God; he does not care about the compliments of friends or the applause of the world, the breath of popular favor; he desires to work not for the sake of the work only; he wants to be rid of self in all its many deceitful, ever-recurring forms, that he may be united to God and the truth. This is the ideal which the Apostle holds before us when he speaks of offering up his work to God, of presenting the body "a living sacrifice," of dying that he may live, and in many similar forms of expression. This is the life of Christ which we would imitate if we could, and do seek partially to imitate as far as our wayward fancies can be detained by the image of a Divine love. Like Christ we have a work to do which we cannot transfer to Him, but in which the thought of Him, the great Example of mankind, may be always present with us. The power of that Example has not passed from the earth, and perhaps that very want of confidence in the letter of Scripture, of which I was speaking at the beginning of this sermon, to which criticism and comparison of documents have given rise,

and which by some persons is regarded as the destruction of the Christian faith, may be really the means by which we attain to a higher comprehension of the whole, passing from words to things—from the sayings of Christ to the life of Christ when He was upon the earth, to the life of Christ dwelling in the hearts of men. Some one will, perhaps, think that this sort of language, or any language of Scripture, is too mystical for the daylight of the nineteenth century. He has never had the feelings described, and would be unreal in pretending to have them; but still, if he have any nobility of nature, he will not deny that to be disinterested is better than to be interested, to live above the world better than to live in the world, to wrestle with the truth better than to be the servant of the fancies and the prejudices of men—he will not deny that his duty is to make the most of life in the highest sense. He may even carry his idea of living for others to an extent which is hardly realized in the Christianity of the present day. To him we have only to say that, although divided from him in name, we desire to be one with him in heart, believing that, as there are nominal Christians in the world who say that they are and are not, so there are unconscious Christians in the world who say that they are not and yet are; and we pray for him and for ourselves that he and we may not have lived in vain. And some one else will, perhaps, make a reflection of another kind—on the manner in which the words of the text have been considered. He will say that there must be some broken lives as well as perfect lives, which, owing to accident, or illness, or early death, could never be framed into any perfect or consistent whole. There have been men of genius cut off before their time—statesmen having the promise of a great future; poets and others in whose memory poets have sung, who, according to the ordinary term of human life, would have been amongst us still; and there is hardly any family in which the simple yet touching question is not sometimes asked, What would he or she have been if living now? Yes; we acknowledge that there are broken lives, pieces of lives which have been begun in this world, to be completed, as we believe, in another state of being. And some of them have been like fragments of ancient art, which we prize, not for their completeness, but for their quality, and because they serve to give us a type of something which we could hardly see anywhere upon earth. Such lives we must judge, not by what the persons said, or wrote, or did, in the short space of human existence, but by what they were—if they exercised some

peculiar influence on their companions, or on society; if they had some rare grace of humility and simplicity, of resignation, or love of truth, or self-devotion which was not to be met with in others. God does not measure men's lives wholly by the amount of work which they are able to accomplish in them: He who gave the power of work may also withhold it; and some of these broken lives may have a value in His sight which no bustle or activity of ordinary people can attain. There have been persons confined to a bed of sickness—blind, palsied, tormented with pain—who yet may be said to have lived an almost perfect life. Such persons afford examples to us, not, indeed, of a work carried out to the end—for their circumstances did not admit of this—but of a work, whether fortunate or unfortunate, which at any moment is acceptable to God. And we desire to learn of them, and to have an end like theirs, when the work of active life is over and we sit patiently waiting for the will of God.

AGNOSTICISM.

BY THE REV. T. HILES HITCHENS, D. D.

"My God, we know Thee."—HOSEA, VIII. 2.

THE word Agnosticism is derived from the Greek *agnostos*, which signifies unknowing, unknown, unknowable. An agnostic is not one who knows nothing, for some men who are embraced by this term are men of unusual mental attainments and ability. He is one who neither denies nor affirms. As a theological term it was adopted on the suggestion of Professor Huxley, at a party of scientists held at the house of the editor of *The Nineteenth Century Review*, on Clapham Common, in the year 1869, and is applied to those who hold that there are matters pertaining to religion which we not only do not know, but have no means of knowing; that the existence of any person or thing beyond and behind material phenomena is unknown, and, with our present faculties, never can be known; that the existence and person of God, as well as a future state, are subjects upon which we are ignorant and must be content to remain so. An agnostic does not simply assert the incompleteness of human knowledge upon things Divine, but that real knowledge concerning such things is an impossibility to man. An agnostic is not an atheist; for he does not believe it to be within his power to obtain sufficient knowledge to enable him to deny the existence of a God. An agnostic is not what is generally known as a sceptic; scepticism has no conclusion for or against—it is a state of questioning; but agnosticism positively affirms that we have, and can get, no knowledge of God or of the unseen world.

Among agnostics of the present time Mr. Herbert Spencer takes a foremost place. Indeed, he may be regarded as the chief exponent and advocate of their opinions. If, then, we can, in few words, state Mr. Spencer's views, we shall best describe agnosticism. Those views have been thus summarized: "Mr. Herbert Spencer maintains that (1) the proper object of religion is a Something which can never be known, or

conceived, or understood; to which we cannot apply the terms emotion, will, intelligence; of which we cannot affirm or deny that it is either person, or being, or mind, or matter, or, indeed, anything else. (2) All that we can say of it is that it is an Inscrutable Existence, or an Unknowable Cause; we can neither know nor conceive what it is, nor how it came about, nor how it operates. It is, notwithstanding, the Ultimate Cause, the All-being, the Creative Power. (3) The essential business of religion so understood is to keep alive the consciousness of a mystery that cannot be fathomed. (4) We are not concerned with the question what effect this religion will have as a moral agent, or whether it will make good men and women. Religion has to do with mystery, not with morals."*

Mr. Spencer and those who follow his lead are opposed to the positive dogmatic atheism which we encounter in some quarters. He says: "Amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty that human thought is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed."† And Professor Huxley says: "Of all the senseless babble I have ever [illegible] cases to call the demonstrations of those philosophers who undertake to tell us all about the nature of God would be the worst, if there were not a still greater absurdity in the pretensions of the philosophers who try to prove there is no God."‡ But neither Mr. Spencer nor Professor Huxley, nor Mr. Matthew Arnold, nor any other agnostic will concede the personality of that "Eternal Energy from which all things proceed." They do not degrade God, as does the pantheist, nor deny the existence of God as does the atheist; but they wholly ignore the Divine Being—they will not grant that He is intelligent, personal, or possessed of moral attributes. They claim to be religious in that they reverence the phenomenal and the Great Unknown above and behind it; but, holding that the senses are the only source of knowledge, they do not know, and say we never can know, that the Eternal Energy behind all phenomena can think, feel, will, and contrive. That is a Great Cause, but whether that Cause has a heart to love us, or

* *Nineteenth Century Review*, September, 1884, p. 356.
† *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1884.
‡ *Science and Culture*, p. 241.

mind to think of us, or an ear to listen to us, or an eye to watch us, or a hand to help us, the agnostic says we *do not* know, and *cannot* know. The unknowableness of the Divine Being from being formulated as a Philosophy is now "defended as a Theology and hailed as a Religion."

I think it can be shown that agnosticism is open to three objections. It is presumptive, it is paralyzing, and it is pernicious.

(*a*) *It is presumptive.*—The agnostic begins by a confession of human ignorance, and then proceeds to make a universal assertion which implies the possession of universal knowledge. He refers to the Supreme Cause of all things, and declares that "the Unconditioned is unconditioned that can never be known or conceived or understood." Such a declaration presumes that the said agnostic knows the Unknown intimately—knows the Unknown so well as to be in a position to say that, the Unknown Something has no ability or power to make himself more fully known to the senses of men than at present. Moreover, to assert that the Unknown Cause "can never be known, or conceived, or understood," is to assume that the speaker is competent to fix the condition and calibre of all mind in all ages. To say that the Inscrutable Existence will *never* be known by man is to say we know what will be the extent of all men's knowledge in the future. *We* cannot find out God unto perfection, it is true; but surely it is within the range of possibility that [illegible] may find out more about Him than we have done. What we cannot say at present does not warrant us in saying we cannot ever be sure of all possible knowledge with regard to finite agents. On the one hand, the agnostic presumptuously implies that the great First Cause has not either the ability or the willingness to make Himself known to His creatures—which assumes a marvellous acquaintance with the so-called Unknown One; and, on the other hand, the agnostic implies that he possesses finality with all mind at the present and a prevision of the power of all mind in the future. He who says that God is "unknowable," makes a self-contradictory statement, and assumes such knowledge as can be attributed only to a Divine Being. To suppose that the Almighty One can create finite being, and yet not be able to make Himself intelligible to His own intelligent creatures, is a palpable inconsistency, and the man who so limits the Infinite and restricts the Absolute implies that he himself is possessed of infinite knowledge. We may well say with

the prophet, "Shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding?"

(3) *Agnosticism a paralyzer.*—The great motive-spring of human activity and basis of human happiness is Faith. No difficult enterprise has been prosecuted, no heroic task performed without it. The three steps taken by every man who has achieved aught worthy of remembrance have been these—conception, conviction and action. The conviction was the faith which stimulated the soul and sustained the action. Amid difficulties and dangers the most threatening, men have toiled on with indomitable strength, because enthusiasm with them is the supreme element of their energy and perseverance. Agricultural toilers, mechanical inventors, geographical explorers, military warriors, and scientific discoverers have all been moved to effort, calmed in trial and invigorated in moments of weakness by Faith. All social and political institutions are moved by faith, while in the spiritual realm it is the very source of life. It reposes upon the word of the Infinite One; it reclines upon the Person of Jesus, God's Representative and man's Saviour; it grasps the Hand of Omnipotence in every season of weakness; it appropriates the righteousness of Christ; it brings the spirit of man into personal contact with the Saviour. This trust in God, as well as belief about Him, gilds the day with supernal glory, and transforms the darkness of night into light above the brightness of the sun.

Then, united to this Faith but distinct from it, is Hope—that vigorous principle which enlists in its service both head and heart. It pre-anticipates what Faith sees. It is

> The rainbow to the storms of life,
> The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
> And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray.

No merchant would trade, no mariner sail, no soldier fight, no husbandman plough, no politician plead, no minister preach, without hope. Johnson well says: "Where there is no hope there can be no endeavor." Nor is hope less valuable to the Christian. What his faith discerns his hope delights in. It is an inspiration to him at all seasons, diminishing the sorrows of the present and antedating the joys of the future.

But agnosticism bows these two fair angels out of human society. It finds no room for faith or hope in the heart of man. It tells us that we

know only the phenomenal; that all the reliable information we possess must come through the senses; that we have no spiritual insight; that we do not know, and can never know, that there is a Personal God; that we do not know, and can never know, that there is a future state. How, then, can science toil? How can our philanthropists plod? How can our moralists work for the elevation of society? Their hands are tied; their hearts are oppressed; their stimulus to effort is gone; they are hopeless and faithless; they have no guarantee for the stability of nature's laws; they have no foundation of right between man and man; morality must be based upon expediency, because they have no positive moral law, having no knowledge of a Divine Legislator; they have no Supreme Being to whom man, consciously guilty, can repair for forgiveness of the past, and no sympathetic and all-powerful Helper to whom he can pray for assistance in seeking the true and good; they have no future where the wrongs of time will be righted or the well-doing of earth rewarded. To man in his need agnosticism says, "Look to the Unknowable," and to man in his deepest woe it can only say, "Think on the Mystery that cannot be fathomed" and the unknowable "Power that is omnipresent." To man with his yearnings after eternal life, it says, "Sleep the sleep of death, thou coward heart! and he who is he, the moment after thy death pang, what is he but thyself, less a bundle of old memories? If this immortality be not enough, there seems to be none other immediately attainable."* Hope and faith cannot live in such an intellectual atmosphere. Faith has nothing to grasp, and hope nothing to anticipate. Energy is smothered, resolution chained, and perseverance extirpated. If every man in society were a consistent agnostic there would be a speedy and inglorious termination to all scientific, social, political and ecclesiastical enterprises. The ship of state would be left upon the dreary ocean of the unknown and unknowable to drift whither it might.

If agnosticism gave us aught that is satisfactory, in lieu of the faith and hope of which it robs us, the case would be altered. If it could present us with any other adequate stimulus to physical, mental and spiritual work, there would be less objection upon this ground. But it does not. It is entirely negative. It pulls down, but does not build

* *The Agnostic Annual*, 1885, p. 1.

up. It has no constructive force. It is deficient in its very nomenclature. It objects to the great First Cause being styled Intelligent, because that is a word of uncertain signification; but it proffers us no other in its stead. It tells us that we know nothing about the moral attributes of the Deity, for all things are governed by "some principle immensely transcending all that we understand by morality"; but that transcendent principle is nameless. It objects to the terms Person and Personality, asserting that they express nothing when applied to the First Cause; but we are left without any substitute. Mr. Ely says that "Christianity and agnosticism are as wide as the poles asunder"; that "Christianity has largely succeeded in making people"; that agnosticism "strikes straight from the shoulder a deathblow to the unqualified assertions the audacious dogmatism, of Christianity"; but it has no creed to offer in its place. It dishonors and dethrones Christ, speaking of Him as "the omniscient ignoramus of Galilee". But it has no perfect person, no unchanging Friend, no mighty Saviour as substitute. It laughs at our ideas of immortality, and describes the heaven of the Bible as "a packing-box paradise"; but it points to no other eternal home. Thus, at the commencement of human effort, we find in agnosticism any incentive to moral, mental, or spiritual progress, the mind is beaten back into a sombre state of conscious helplessness and hopeless ignorance.

(3) But I go further, and affirm that agnosticism is not simply paralyzing—*it is positively pernicious.*

It *disposes of all true religion.* What is religion? It is not the observance of outward ritual. It is not the performance of deeds of benevolence. It is not the full confidence in pious men. It is not the possession of scriptural knowledge. It is not the existence of tender feeling. It is not the mere observance of moral law. All these constituents may be found in true religion; some of them must exist. But religion is more than these all combined. It is the linking of a soul to a Personal God.

It is the voluntary, entire and enthusiastic wedlock of the spirit to the Divine Author of our being. It is conscious contact and endearing communion with the Deity. But agnosticism defines religion as "devotion to that which is believed to be best." It has no personal God—no intelligent sympathetic, responsive object around which the affections of the soul can entwine. It, as Mr. Herbert Spencer says, "the power

which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable," then, for aught we know to the contrary, it is a vicious, villainous, venomous, execrable power. We do not know but that it deserves our scorn rather than our homage, our distrust rather than our confidence, our hatred rather than our affection. If the Supreme Power be "*utterly* inscrutable" there is no reason why we should cherish toward it one set of emotions in preference to another. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his "Last Words About Agnosticism,"* impresses upon us the thought that amid the disappearance of religious beliefs and sentiments consequent upon the spread of agnosticism, "there must ever survive those which are appropriate in the consciousness of a Mystery that cannot be fathomed, and a Power that is Omnipresent." But what are these "appropriate" sentiments? They can be none other than *awe*, which is icy and overshadowing, and *wonder*, which, as the offspring of ignorance, represses all reason. These two sentiments alone will never beget peace of mind, or purity of heart, or integrity of life. There is no place found for confidence, or affection, or obedience, or conformity. Awe and wonder united are unnatural, and never can make a man truly religious.

Dispensing thus with religion, agnosticism strikes away one of the chief—indeed, the main and indispensable—support of society. It parts with the most powerful of all forces for conserving the nation. It abolishes the surest, and shortest, and safest means of securing the country's welfare. It has been proved to the world by the lamentable history of other nations that civilization, refined education, cultivated arts, classic learning, poetry, philosophy, and valor are not enough to promote national happiness and safety, or preserve national status and prosperity. La Place, himself for long an unbeliever, said, in his advanced years, "I have lived long enough to know what I did not at one time believe—that no society can be upheld in happiness and honor without the sentiment of religion." And Voltaire did not fail to see the pernicious effects upon society by ignoring the Personal Ruler of the world. He saw men, under the teaching of infidelity growing worse and worse, till he confessed that if there be no God, "then we must invent one."

The agnostics of the present day may be mainly intelligent, cultivated gentlemen whose position in society is largely a safeguard to them, and

* *Nineteenth Century*, November, 1884, p. 833.

propriety of life. But, if agnosticism be correct, then it is right that it should be spread; if spread, then men of all characters and grades may embrace its principles; whoever embraces the principles of agnosticism should live according to them; for, if the principles be right, it cannot be wrong to put them into practice. What, then, do we get? We get society permeated with the idea that there is no Moral Governor, hence no moral accountability. The result will quickly be that the moral law will be trampled under foot. Disorder, violence, plunder, murder, suicide, pollution, and death will be the fashion. Behavior before man and toward man will become only a question of expediency. The conspicuous characters will answer to the description given by our Poet-Laureate in his recent lyrical address to Freedom :—

> Men loud against all forms of power,
> Unfurnish'd brows, tempestuous tongues,
> Expecting all things in an hour—
> Brass mouths and iron lungs! *

The fittest, in the sense of the mentally shrewdest and physically strongest, will survive. The world will become one vast Aceldama, and the very antipodes of the effects of Christianity for the last eighteen centuries will be produced. Can that be a beneficial system that has such resultants? By their fruits ye shall know systems and principles, as well as persons.

Dispensing with religion, agnosticism *begets despair*. All hope for progress and improvement in this life being undermined, all hope of another life beyond this, being snatched from the mental grasp, there is nothing left for the heart of man but to settle down into a stony state of utter desolation and despair. Baron Bunsen, for some time Russian Ambassador in this country, was known frequently during his life to refer to the gloom which hung over the terrestrial future when surveyed from the modern standpoint of thought. He saw that agnosticism encouraged pessimism. Schopenhauer says: "Our condition is so utterly wretched that total annihilation would be preferable. The condition of the world is a matter of grief and a fundamental misfortune." Froude, in his biography of Carlyle, says: "The agnostic doctrines, he (Carlyle) once said

* *Macmillan's Magazine*, December, 1884.

to me, were to appearance like the finest flour from which you might expect the most excellent bread; but when you came to feed on it, you found it was powdered glass, and you had been eating the deadliest poison." Sirs, the greatest catastrophe that could happen to society at large would be the acceptance and spread of agnosticism. Everything in life would be metamorphosed. All the brightness and spring of youth would depart; all the aspiration and energy of manhood would be crushed; all the pleasant memories of old age would be expunged; and all the sustaining prospect of eternal reunion to the loved ones who passed off the stage of life before us would be blighted. Society would be disorganized, and individual man wander through life a helpless creature of circumstances, "without God and without hope in the world."

But, sirs, God *is* known, though our knowledge is incomplete. We cannot perfectly comprehend Him; but we have sufficient knowledge to justify and demand our worship of God, our trust in, and love for, and obedience to Him. *God is not unknown, nor unknowable, even our agnostic friends being witnesses.* There will be found a great disagreement between the principles and the phraseology of the agnostics. Their creed and its clothing seem irreconcilable. They tell us that the great First Cause is unknown and unknowable: and yet they express themselves as men possessed of marvellous knowledge of that absolute reality. If the Great Source of all be positively unknowable to man, then it is impossible for man to have any manifestations of that unknowable power—or, if manifestations be made, they can convey no addition to man's knowledge of that Ultimate Reality. But Mr. Herbert Spencer assigns to the Unknowable the attributes of Eternity, Omnipresence, Power, and Causal Energy. He thus evinces an extraordinary stretch of knowledge concerning the Unknowable. Pray how does Mr. Spencer obtain so much knowledge? He replies, "By our mental obligation to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some power." We accept that explanation, but ask, "Why should such process of reasoning be restricted?" If the varied phenomena in the universe be the manifestations of the character and conduct of the Great Cause, then let us carefully study those phenomena for, peradventure, we shall, by the same process of reasoning, know more of that Supreme Cause. Taking science as our hand-maid, we examine minutely the productions of nature. We find a uniformity of plan prevailing. All living forms are constructed

upon the same pattern—at least, so far as their main features are concerned. All substances, great and small, are obedient to the same law of gravitation. Everything suggests the operation of *One* and only *One* Supreme Cause. We discover the phenomena of life everywhere. All is active. Development, growth, movement and generation mark all things. Reason, therefore, suggests that the Cause must be endowed with vital energy—that it must be a *living* and *life-giving* Cause. We pursue our [illegible] we note that the phenomena of nature are systematically [illegible] means have been designed for the accomplishment of certain ends, the guiding principle of purpose prevails, and to man has been vouchsafed the ability to think, reason, will and elect. Such phenomena manifest the intelligence of the Supreme Cause. They exhibit thought. The Cause, therefore, must be a *Thinker*, and so a *Person*. Moreover, we observe beauties in form and color; we trace sweet fragrance, melodious music, delicious fruits, bountiful and timely provision, remedial supplies to meet life's ills, and the tendency of all things to garland our path with beauty and make our militant sojourn joyous. We conclude that the Supreme Cause is *sympathetic*, *kind* and *loving*. And then, once more, we look within ourselves to the phenomena of mind; we note the aspirations after purity and truth; we see the sovereignty of conscience, the bitter remorse which stings the evil-doer, and the blessed peace which satisfies and sustains the consistent man. From such mental characteristics we cannot but conclude that the Supreme Cause is *just*, *true* and *pure*. Thus, by "the mental obligation to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation" of a suitable power, we come to know the unity, vitality, intelligence, love and justice of that Absolute Reality whom Mr. Spencer allows is eternal and omnipresent; we come to see that the Absolute Reality is none other than the Personal God.

We turn to Mr. Matthew Arnold's description of the First Cause as being the "Eternal Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." Mr. Arnold declines to say whether that Eternal Power is either a person or a thing. He tells us we do not know and never can know. But now examine his definition—the "Eternal Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." Mr. Arnold believes in an "Eternal Power"; so do we. He believes in an "Eternal Power" that "makes for" something. This is an important step higher. How can a Power "make for" any definit end unless that power be possessed of a con-

scious purpose—a purpose which necessitates choice and refusal—a purpose which therefore involves intelligence? But more, this "Eternal Power makes for righteousness." The Power must consequently know what is righteous and what is unrighteous; it must love the righteous, must prefer the righteous, in order consciously to "make for righteousness" as its grand goal. It must, then, be a righteous Power. The "Eternal Power that makes for righteousness" is a sentience resolvable into an Eternally Intelligent Righteous and Omnipotent Being. Thus, by their own process of reasoning, and from their own words, we obtain more knowledge of God than the agnostic leaders affirmed to be possible.

Yes, sirs, God is known! We turn to that oldest and best of books, the genuineness and authenticity of which have never yet been disproved, and therein we find disclosures of the character of the Divine Being—disclosures which commend themselves to our judgment, meet the yearnings of our hearts, and cheer and calm our perturbed spirits. We read of Him as being "very great," as "clothed with honor and majesty," covered "with light as with a garment," as stretching "out the heavens as a curtain," laying "the beams of His chambers in the waters," making "the clouds His chariot," walking "upon the wings of the wind," as "merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy," pitying "them that fear Him," "forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin," "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." These and a thousand other vivid and vital expressions clearly show how thoroughly the personality of the Supreme Cause was accepted by the inspired penmen.

Yes, God *is* known! We turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect embodiment of all goodness, "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person," and we obtain a revelation of God in Him. He was "Immanuel, God with us." He Himself said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." The acquaintance of Jesus with the latent secrets of men's hearts, the tender sympathy He manifested toward the sick and sad, the gracious forgiveness He exercised in relation to the sinful, the patience with which He treated His opponents, His stern denunciations of evil, His rigid justice, His miraculous power over created objects, His acquaintance with and control over the spirit-world—all these and other features of His matchless life are insights into the stupendous character of the Infinite Creator whom we adore.

Yes, God *is* known! We turn to the realm of Christian experience, and rejoicingly affirm, "This is life eternal to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The light by which objects around are made visible is itself invisible. But it gives color, life and activity to things exposed to its influence. So when our hearts receive God we are sensible of effects within, that none but God could produce. "No man hath seen God at any time. But if we love one another, God *dwelleth in* us." We possess the glad consciousness that a change which no mortal strength, wisdom, nor influence could effect, has been accomplished in us by God. We once felt that, however much our mind may be improved by culture, developed by science, and elevated by the moralizing influence of refined society, yet there remained a sad alienation from the Holy One, and a gravitation toward all that is earthly and evil. But now our happiest hours are spent in communion with God. We feel Him near to us. We know He hears us when we speak to Him. We have direct and distinct answers to our prayers. We are holier and happier than we were before we submitted our souls to Him.

It cannot, for a moment, be supposed that blessings so vast, and transformations so mighty, are the offspring of falsehood—that the marvellous effects resulting from our belief in God are the fruits of a mere illusion. The religion within us is either of Divine origin, or it is not. If it *is*, then no wonder that its effects are so satisfying and so sanctifying. They are such as we might expect from spiritual contact with that Supreme Being of whom nature and the Bible speak. If our religion be *not* Divine, then we have a human system, a finite impression, a simple illusion suited to the necessities and yearnings of our nature, and adapted to make life pure, joyous, honorable, noble and covetable—then the unreal is necessary to produce the real, and falsehood is more useful than fact. If our religion be Divine, we are obligated to seek it. If *not* Divine, then the superior excellence and supreme worth of this production of a diseased brain claim our attention and allegiance. We are thus disposed to exclaim with President Edwards, when, in 1740, men ridiculed and attempted to explain away a revival of religion in New England, "If such things are enthusiasm and the fruits of a distempered brain, let my brain be evermore possessed of that happy distemper." Thus, we know that God *is*, and that He is "the rewarder

of them that diligently seek Him." We "know in part," and we anticipate the day when the veil of flesh and sense shall be removed, and we shall for ever enjoy the beatific vision of the Deity. We cling to the Saviour's words, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

We know! We know!
Others may balance in the scales of doubt
The hidden future; slowly reason out—
Gleaning up ear by ear, like patient Ruth—
Their half-proved probabilities of truth.
We fill our arms and bind the golden sheaves,
Along the track one Master Reaper leaves,
Whose gleaming sickle, severing as it sweeps
Real from seeming, Truth's rich harvest reaps.
His Footsteps are before us as we go.
Therefore we know! We know!

We know! We know!
Let others, with dim eyes and bated breath,
Linger before the shadowy gate of death;
Question the stars, the earth, the winds, to say
If man be more than animated clay.
We follow One who pass'd the gate, and then,
Re-clad in flesh, came back and talk'd with men.
Through the once silent darkness voices clear
Ring out—"The Lord is risen; He is not here!"
But where He pass'd, the heavens are still aglow.
Therefore we know! We know!

We know! We know!
"We know in part," but not uncertainly.
We do not doubt or reason, for we see.
The clouds around us cannot make it night,
For with His eyes we see Who lives in light.
"Whither I go, ye know," we heard Him say.
So as some patient watcher for the day—
While Earth, with veiled face and dew-cold breast,
Steals thro' the starlight toward the bridal East,
Beholds the silver dawn on peaks of snow,
Even thus *we know!* WE KNOW!

BY THE REV. DAVID DAVIS.

Preached at Regent's Park Chapel, Sunday, February 8th, 1885.

"CHRIST LEAVING THE PRÆTORIUM."

MARK XV. 20.

"And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him."

We have now arrived at a period in which the suffering aspect of our Lord's life is brought into special prominence. We have on a previous occasion spoken of Him as "The Man of Sorrows," bearing His burden alone and far away from human observation and sympathy. We have also spoken of "The Shadow of the Cross"—on the consciousness of the approaching period which Jesus specially designated *His Hour*—as resting like the shadow of a great darkness upon His spirit, absorbing His thoughts more and more, and giving a direction to all His aspirations, but as yet but imperfectly understood by those who knew Him best, and but very imperfectly realized by His mother.

To-night we have to dwell upon an event which all who witnessed it acknowledged as a crisis in that great life, and readily associated with a cross of fortune and shame. The world, as a rule, recognizes the existence of a cross only by some outward symbol which represents it. "Hearts that break, and lives that die," are not recognized as sorrowing mourners by the bulk of men and women; and thus three-fourths of the world's sorrow passes unobserved, borne as it is in loneliness and out of sight by heroic souls who never announce the intensity of their grief on the streets of human care. The world's more superficial sorrow is proclaimed on every street corner in the whining tones of professional beggary and by a superfluity of rags and dirt; but, as a rule, the deepest sorrow of souls like the Man of Sorrows—souls "not strong nor cry," neither does

any man hear its "voice in the streets." Such a sorrow can only be recognized by the world, if ever, when it culminates in a crisis—a breakdown in health, shattering of nerve, and consequent incapacity for duty. Only then do men learn that it has been at work and has left behind its marks.

The poet continues:

> O hearts that break and give no sign,
> *Save whitening lips and fading tresses.*

At most, men only see the breaking heart to the extent that they note "the whitening lip" and the "fading tresses," not always these. How many hearts, too, break which have not even told the story in that silent way!

The greatest of all sufferers bore His burden unobserved, until the hour in which He left the Prætorium for Golgotha. Men did not see His cross until the wooden instrument of torture was brought forth by the Roman soldier to be borne by the great Sufferer. Even when He gave the first clear intimation of its presence to His disciples on His last journey to Jerusalem the foremost of them exclaimed, "This be far from Thee!" And even when after His last discourse in the upper room, He proceeded with them to Gethsemane, it was He Who bore His great burden alone and out of sight, for even the three nearest Him were fast asleep while He was sorrowful unto death.

But *now* Jesus has to bear the cross in the full glare of public observation. The surging multitude finds no difficulty now in associating Jesus of Nazareth with a cross. There it is, a visible, tangible thing; but it appears before them as a new and self-evident fact. M. Doré, in the choice of this incident in our Lord's life, selects a subject which is the easiest to depict graphically, and brings with it the more convincing proof of its reality because of its tangible surroundings. It is an incident which affords the artist the opportunity of representing the crown of thorns upon the head of Jesus, the blood staining alike His sacred brow, His long flowing hair, and snow-white robe. It affords the painter, moreover, the opportunity of intensifying the central conception by the isolation of Jesus from all around as well as by the contrast which His countenance presents to the variety of angry and ferocious faces by which He is surrounded. This moment, too, makes it possible for him to introduce the cross into the scene ere as yet it has been placed upon the shoulders of Jesus and thus the artist is

enabled to represent the majestic tread of the Christ as He approaches that cross which blocks His path. The conception is rendered complete by the representation of the stern Roman soldiers keeping back everything and everybody from that path save Jesus and His cross.

Judging from the earlier sketch which is to be seen, the introduction of the cross into the scene and the isolation of Jesus Christ as the central object of observation involved technical difficulties which could only be overcome by departing from the more accurate representation of fact as given in the earlier studies—the procession of Roman soldiers with their spears immediately behind Jesus.

As the picture stands the conception gains greatly in expression from all these accessories, and appeals with far greater force to the ordinary observer than a more subtle representation of the Man of Sorrows, but lacking these imposing surroundings, possibly could not. It is this quick perception of the conditions of effect, and the daring genius to produce them graphically even at the cost of lacking sometimes strict accuracy and finish, that place this great artist foremost among the most popular painters of the present generation. He may be wanting in historical accuracy of detail; but his picture glows with the spirit of his drama, and that is what the public want above all else. The public appreciation is heightened by the colossal dimensions of this painting and the life-like representation of those who take part in the awful transaction so powerfully depicted.

There are three things in my theme to-night, as illustrated by this great painting:

1. Our Lord proceeds on His last journey, and is about to lay down His life *in a truly noble manner*. The face of that central figure is young, full of suffering and sorrow, it is true, pale and worn with sleeplessness, with three successive and wearisome trials, scourgings, and savage ill-treatment; but withal wearing no wrinkle upon the brow and no trace of decay upon the countenance. As we learn from the Gospel story, He is at most but thirty-three years of age. Thus the greatest life and life-work this world has ever witnessed closed at that early period. The Saviour of the world finished His work when as yet He was in the full vigor of youthful manhood. I shall never forget the feeling that came over me when I reached my thirty-fourth birthday; it came upon me with a lightning flash that I had lived longer in the world than the man Christ Jesus: and *what had I*

done? I was filled with shame. I suggest the solemn consideration to you, young men and women, to-night. Your Lord, as man, passed away from the world probably before He was thirty-three, certainly before he was thirty-four years of age. We have but condensed narratives of even that brief period of His life which is recorded; but we cannot read them without being impressed with the way in which He condensed work into the briefest possible space of time. Constantly, especially in the record by Mark, we find ourselves in the rush of His activity and borne on by the current. The time was short and the work was great. He came to devote His life at full flow to work and to sacrifice. His gift was to be Himself, and Himself at His best. Oh, what an inspiration for young men should His example be! When God sent His Son into the world to do the work which had to be done, and to offer the sacrifice which had to be offered, He ordained that He should do all under the age of thirty-three. There should be no ebb in his energy; but Calvary, the scene of His death, should witness the highest tidal wave of His youthful life, and therefore the sacrifice of the highest humanity at its highest point.

As the Father has sent Him into this world, so He has sent us. Young men, what have we done? Of course, there are aspects of our Lord's character which are infinitely beyond our reach—the Divine. We look upon them at a great distance with reverence and wonder. But there are other aspects within our reach—those which are supplied by the constant and unwearying activities of Jesus Christ, by His consecration to the work given Him to do within the brief period allotted for work. His exclamation was, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work"; and, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." Shall that be our exclamation? Remember that most men who have blessed the world have laid the foundation of their kingdoms—if I may so express it—at an early age. They have, by way of preparatory work and discipline, developed their plans, gone down deep for foundations, and laid massive stones out of sight before they have been thirty years of age. I believe that almost every great inspiration comes to a man when he is young. He may, and does, lack experience in early days, and in later years has to modify his plans in many instances; but even then the early labor has been well spent; and what he did before he was thirty years of age decides to a large extent what he can do before he dies, though he live to the age of eighty

Let that one lesson come to us with the first glimpse of that youthful central figure in the painting—a lesson indeed intensified by the sanctity. I know not whether to the consecration or not, of the artist himself—to take up all our youthful energies in the best and highest services, to make such use of the vigor of youth that, when the mellowness of old age comes, it shall be superadded to the energetic work of earlier days.

Again :

H. In that figure in the midst of such surroundings we recognize *the centre of powerful and contrasting forces*. There is no one unmoved among the vast throng represented upon that expanse of canvas. Look at it. Around Jesus are different lines progressive of every type of human being. Upon the right and in the foreground of the picture we recognize in a little group huddled together by the evidence of the mob behind and the presence of the Roman soldiers in front to keep back the crowd, the women who in their pure love ministered to the wants of their substance and to the last are faithful in their adherence to Him. Among them is Mary, the mother of Jesus, one of the finest conceptions in the whole picture, subdued with sorrow, pale with intense anguish, but withal calm, patient, drooping, as it would appear, to take a motherly solace upon the Great Son upon this last lonely journey; but at present, as the Roman guard goes by and glares back with rude force, she all but closes her eyes and looks to the earth. Looking at that countenance just then, it is not difficult to imagine that the woman who for thirty years had "kept these sayings in her heart" would have solved the mysterious dispensations and reconciled the last problems of life, in spite of all that was perplexing, simply to communicate in a transcendence. Humbly clad in the customary white veil like each of the women of Bethlehem and Nazareth, there she stands, the representation of all those virtues which we have learned to attribute to Mary without believing her, and the embodiment of that motherly devotion which never gives up hoping and never gives up loving. Her presence, with that of the other women near, in the midst of the tumultuous throng, betrays with a purity, strength, patience, and domestic tenderness, which help to lighten up that picture, so dark with guilt, bitterness, violence, and falsity.

Behind Mary and the other women are faces of the coarsest features, who with open mouths shout words of execration, probably, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!"—sounds that must have been cruelly harsh and

discordant upon the ears of that mother, who had heard other messages concerning her great Son and other prophecies concerning His destiny. On the other side of the path, in the left foreground, we see, among many, one whom I would recognize though perhaps wrongly, as John the beloved disciple, who gazes with a look of tender sadness toward the Christ as He descends the steps. Near him a poor old man, weary, worn and bent, leaning upon his staff, leaning upon his covenants evident tokens of wasting weakness, and looking as if expecting a blessing from the great Healer in the very last journey He has to take.

Above and on each side of the steps which our Lord descends there are numerous other groups. On the one hand, in the middle distance, we see represented in brilliant colors one of the ideal types of voluptuous and ferocious countenances expressive of total deficit in the conception them and the event which is about to take place. They seem to loathe the Christ, and display such an amount of malignity, enmity, in their expression of their hatred as is scarcely within the scope of art to depict or humanity to depict. These accompanying figures in position on the left are scarcely of a superior type.

On the steps are three chief priests; Christ's robe touches one of them as He descends the steps. The one [illegible] looks upon Christ with a sabatic admixture of hatred and contempt. Next to him is probably Annas, his aged father-in-law, [illegible] upon his staff, and near him is another who bears the dignity of the high-priesthood. At the top of the long flight of steps is Pilate, in his dusky scarlet toga, and near him Herod and a few Jewish dignitaries. With a wave of the hand he seems to repudiate all responsibility in the matter, and to repeat such words as those which he uttered when he washed those hands by way of protest: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." He has been terrified into consent—the name of Tiberius Cæsar on Jewish lips, accompanied by an indirect threat, was enough. He knew that the Emperor was as full of suspicion and misanthropy as he was of leprous

strained. The Jews cried, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. . . . Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." The chief priests, too, answered, "We have no king but Cæsar." Pilate trembled and consented. . . . His action was a typical Roman, looking upon all religions with equally tolerant indifference, treating the Jewish zealots with contempt, and would have made light of the message of Christ's followers, and thus reluctantly gave way. But now, as if remembering his wife's strange dream, and feeling that great suffering which he has condemned rather than his convictions, and which is becoming that cruel travesty which can only end in blood, he seems to be moved to protestation, and waves his hand as he bitterly but vainly renounces any share in the matter.

On each side are massive structures, essentially classic in style. This, of course, is at variance with all we know of the architectural features of Jerusalem. In this respect Doré must not be our guide. Probably he never aimed to be, and never considered it a part of his task to enter into the details of the architecture of Jerusalem at that period. He would probably never think of troubling himself with such minutiæ. Those of us who take a different view regret that on this account he is not a safe guide as a *historic* painter.

Again, on the summit of the hill at whose foot we stand, just where the line of the hill touches the blue sky, we see dimly through the veil of . . . darkness other buildings. . . . The whole topography is imaginary and reveals no attempt at accuracy. . . . The painter would dismiss repellent such a cloud. . . . The natural phenomenon is exceedingly powerful and awe-inspiring. The air is thick of dark prophecy, the clouds gather and thicken, and everything seems to predict such darkness as that which the Evangelists record. The blue sky whitens into cloud, and the cloud darkens into storm—a storm that is charged with awful potencies and possibilities. It is one of the most terrible aspects of atmospheric gloom which can be represented on canvas, such as to imbue the observer with a sense of awful solemnity and with an expectation of some great event.

And all this adds an emphasis to every expression of feeling projected upon the countenances of that vast tumultuous throng.

But there is one thing which brings these varied expressions on the countenances of all into prominent relief. It is our Central Figure. You cannot look at the painting without being impressed with the fact that Jesus Christ brings out of the true heart that which is best in it, and in no way of which I know is this more impressively illustrated than in the hearts of His foes. The very presence of Jesus Christ is an awful revelation of that which is worst in human nature.

It is a *silent* contrast. There is no word spoken. He had already rebuked Herod, Pilate, and the chief priests by His persistent silence. In reply to all their curious inquiries, challenges, and false accusations "He answered them nothing." He is silent still. The noisy tumultuous mob is answered by the dignity and sublimity of silence. The only words that He has to utter are to the women who weep for Him—words with no mistaken conceptions of the nature of His sufferings—and they are words of infinite tenderness. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." After having bitterly exclaimed "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Let His blood be upon us and upon our children"—an awful prayer destined to a terrible response—it was. Their wish would be granted. The chief priest had shouted, "We have no king but Cæsar!" The God of heaven gave them Cæsar, till they were full weary of the iron rod with which he tyrannized over them, and of the cruel hand with which he ruled them under him. He gave them Cæsar, until at last, in the agony of remorse, and in the desperation of hopelessness, they rose up against him. Let only the result in their holy city being devastated, every corner of its wall's lapidary, and their blood saturated, the holy spot where for ages God's temple had stood, "His blood of the Christ was upon them." It was what they asked for and got. Now, as we look at this picture they shout, "Crucify Him!" and the shout rings through the ages as the prophecy of their doom. Yours, reader, are the feelings which sway this throng, but these are all alternative to the presence of Him who is to bear His cross. He is to them "a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death."

Again:

III. Amid all *Jesus sees nothing but the goal:* "Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame." He knew

not look upon the throng, but to a distant object which we do not see. He looks toward Calvary. This is the end of all, the point toward which [illegible] world. The awfulness of anticipation and suspense is over, and the [illegible] there. See how He descends those steps! What majesty! It is like a victor's entry; He walks as if He is on His way to a throne and along a royal path. The stern representatives of the greatest worldempire open wide the way, so that the Christ may not have any further hindrances in His onward march. Every step has in it the dignity of power, and of One who exclaims, "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again."

[illegible] very expressive of the character of Him who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again." But we wish there were more strength in it, in harmony with those words of Christ to which we have just referred. It is too weak. With that one exception it is a wonderfully expressive representation of the countenance of the world's Redeemer.

The cross which is placed athwart His path is to be made sacred by His touch. It was until now the worst instrument of torture and the object of the greatest shame. Only brigands and rebels of the lowest type were crucified upon the cross. It was a punishment reserved for the vilest of criminals. Christ touches *this* and transfigures it, so that wherever the [illegible] We speak of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

that it represents, centre the hopes of dying humanity, and from it goes forth the power that alone can redeem our race.

I hope to refer on next Sunday evening to the painting entitled "The Vale of Tears." I shall do so with the greatest pleasure because in the case of that allegorical painting it will not be necessary to point to any possible divergences of opinion such as those which we have encountered to-day in dwelling upon this historical picture of Christ leaving the Praetorium. M. Doré's pictures appeal mightily to the imagination. Thus when he composes allegory, the imagination, unfettered by the conditions of historical accuracy, has full play, and throws on canvas, as in the case of "The Vale of Tears," marvellous conceptions of human misery and of Christ's power to save and to bless. One cannot but regret that that great genius passed away so early in life before it had fully developed its powers, and, above all, to tone down that rich imagination of his by which he embodied on canvas grand conceptions of truth and duty, and which only required the mellowing influence of a few more years to soften into wondrous harmony and beauty. But enough. God be thanked for all efforts to reproduce on canvas, as well as in words and by deeds, the message of Divine love to our poor fallen race. Be it ours to receive that message in all its fulness, and derive aid to its proper appreciation from whatever direction it may come. Above all, may we seek the unerring guidance of that Spirit of Truth whom the great Saviour has sent into the world, and whose office it is to lead us into all truth, and to make us reverent spirits.

PESSIMISM:

AN UNTENABLE THEORY OF THE UNIVERSE.

BY THE REV. W. GARRETT HORDER.

THE FACTS REGARDED IN THE LIGHT OF EARTH.

PSALM xxvii. 13.

"I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

THERE are many in our day who are fainting because they cannot "see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." A vast number of voices are heard asking the question: "Who will show us any good?" Pessimism—the creed of despair—throws its dark shadow over thousands both in Germany and England. Its wail is heard through much of our popular literature. The light and glow which once filled life with glory have, from many a heart, quite departed. This matter was forced on my attention by a letter I received the other day from a friend and former officer of my own church, in which he says: "A gentleman, I have known in business some years, got into a conversation on religious matters with me the other day, and I found, to my sorrow that he is quite an unbeliever. He states his case thus:—"Seeing the evil and misery that exist and have existed in the world from the beginning, how is it possible to believe in a Being who is omnipotent and omniscient? If He knew of all this, He could have prevented it; and if He did not do so, how can I believe in the goodness of a being who permits millions to come into existence under such conditions?"

Of course, I am not foolish enough to suppose that I can dispose of the difficulty, or "Justify the ways of God to men." But I *am* disposed to [illegible] difficulty may not be altogether useless to others. This difficulty is one that is felt by many an inquiring mind, and is likely to be felt increasingly as men grow more sensitive and tenderhearted. The more sympathetic we

become the more are we disposed to ask: "Why is suffering permitted in the world?" The call us nature mocks as unconcerned; but the tender feel for the woes of their fellows. And their very feeling often awakens the cry: "Why hast Thou made us thus?" All honest and earnest inquiry should be met in a frank and sympathetic spirit. I would not waste time in meeting captious objections, but I would give any time and take any trouble to render help, however slight, to those desiring to know and to know the truth. For a little while I will ask you to consider the subject thus presented to us. In this discourse we will confine our attention to what may actually be seen in the lives of the living. We will turn to another discourse the considerations which may be drawn from the thought of God and an after life.

The first remark I would make is this—*That much of the world is* [illegible] *we are prone to* [illegible]—I admit frankly and freely that, look where we will, the shadows are broad and deep. Wherever there is consciousness [illegible] heard, at some point or other the note of misery. In the animal world the prevailing order is—that the weak and small are the prey of the strong and great. One race lives upon another and lower one. It is thus among the insects which people the air, the fishes that swim the sea, the birds that fill the forests, the beasts that roam the earth. It is no exaggeration to speak of nature, as the Poet Laureate has done, "red in tooth and claw"; whilst over the whole animal world man reigns and, with an unrelenting hand, uses the great destructive forces which his higher intellect and knowledge have afforded him. It is so in less degree in the human realm. The higher races tyrannize over the lower. Before the white man's presence many an aboriginal race has utterly perished; what [illegible] among men [illegible] are miseries which neither civilization, nor culture, nor science, nor even Christianity, nor all of them together, have as yet been able to banish. Poverty is as widespread and as deadly [illegible] as to savage lands. Suffering invades the homes of the wealthy and the great ones. Bereavement wrings the heart of poor and proud, while over all the dark shadow of death hangs in threatening and awful form. Among our fellows the great forces of Nature, which to a large extent man bends to his will, [illegible] from [illegible] and overwhelm him in ruin and death. [illegible] The storm sweeps over a land, and carries death in its train. The sea

her waves. Pestilence stalks forth in subtle and invisible might, and strikes down her victims by thousands. War has made many a fair field red with blood. I do not wonder that many a one who has pon- his feet, and in the agony of his troubled thought, has cried: "Is there in the heavens a God of love, a Father of men? But, great and awful as are nificance. There are those who speak as if cruelty or indifference to suffering is the law of the universe; as if anguish and agony were written across the face of the earth. It is not thus. Anguish, suffering, sorrow, are *not* the prevailing notes in the music of the earth. They are rather notes of the major chords of the music.

> Never was day so over-sick with showers
> But that it had some intermitting hours;
> Never was night so tedious but it knew
> The last watch out, and saw the dawning, too;
> Never was dungeon so obscurely deep
> Wherein or light or day did never peep;
> Never did moon so ebb or seas so wane
> But they left hope-seed to fill up again.
>
> R. HERRICK ("Hesperides").

This is true of each of the realms to which I have referred. A very mer air is but their cry of joy. The birds, though exposed to the chill may at any moment be devoured by larger members of their own

the blow that will lay them low. They spout on prairie or jungle, or on the plain, happy as the days are long. And it is thus in the human world. To hear some men talk you would think that there was nothing but woe. Wordsworth calls "the low sad music of humanity." * Plaintive, indeed, he found, and with an inexpressible sadness; but the music has its hallelujahs as well as its miserere. Humanity has its joys as well as its sorrows, its pleasures as well as its pains. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." There are the exceptions with whom we may weep, but there are, also, the exceptions with whom we may rejoice. Calamities are the exception and not the rule. Earthquakes are not always universally disastrous, storms are not always raging on the ocean, pestilence is not always stalking abroad. But unfortunately, we note these all too carefully, and overlook, or fail to ground, the quietness and stability of the earth, the calmness of the sea, the health of the peoples. We cry, "How pitiful!" and fail to cry, "God be praised!" The fact, is, the pervading, the consistent element in Nature and life is the good; the non-effective, the exceptional is the painful, the troublous. Look at your own lives, and say whether it is not so. How many comparatively are the days in which you have been racked by pain or distressed by sorrow, as contrasted with calmness! The times in which it has been so with you are remembered and even recorded; but the times in which the stream of your life flowed peacefully and quietly on are unrecorded and almost forgotten. The cry of Jacob—"Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage"—is neither a true nor an appreciative one, for they were not few, nor, so far as God was concerned with them, were they evil. And the modern representative of Jacob—the Pessimist who cries, "Who will show us any good"—is not wise in his observation of life; and out of his false and one-sided view there grow the gloomy and unhuman thoughts which shadow his life.

Then, too, it must be remembered *that much of the misery of mankind, as we look is not so great to those who bear it, as it appears to us.*—I do not wish, in the least, to understate such misery, so that we should be content to let it remain; God forbid! But, at the same time, that misery can only be rightly estimated from the standpoint of those who have to bear it. We

* "The end of human existence is suffering." "Accustom yourself to consider this world as a penal colony." "A man should not address his neighbor as Sir! but as My Fellow-sufferer." Cf. "Modern Pessimism" by Mr. Radford Thomson, for these and many other such sayings of Schopenhauer.

going into homes of poverty and distress, we see their barrenness of furniture, their lack of comfort and refinement—no pictures adorn the wall, no objects of beauty meet the eye, no books offer their pages to instruct or to charm the mind. The very necessities of life are scarcely to be found there. And our heart aches at the sight. It seems scarcely right to go on living [illegible] comforts and refinement. Life to us seems scarcely worth living without these. Why? Because for years we have been used to them. But soon it ceases to be one more trial, even in the case of those who have dropped down from higher ranks of life, the poor have not been used to these things. They even know not the evils or shame amongst which they are found. They are used to it, and use is second nature, so that even amidst their loathsome surroundings they are comparatively happy. I dare say those above us in rank as they look at our life, as they see the narrow limits of our houses, their inferior style of adornment, the absence of luxuries to which they are accustomed would be disposed to pity us and think ours a very unenviable lot. But their pity would be wasted, for we are accustomed to our lot. We feel not the lack which they discern. Indeed, I question very much whether there is not quite as much pure happiness among the middle as among the upper classes of society. I should be disposed to say that because work is [illegible] there is probably more. We must not forget that there are wondrous powers of adaptation to circumstances in human nature, or [illegible] in all true natures. Animals suit themselves to the countries and climates to which they may be taken. Take a sheep to a warm country like India, and its coat will grow less woolly and more like hair in its texture. Take it to a cold country, and it will grow more woolly than it is in this country. And that is but a visible sign of how [illegible] to its surroundings. As Byron well says:

> Life will suit
> Itself to sorrow's most detested fruit.

[illegible] nature. And, therefore, to get a right idea of the condition of even the poorest we must look at it from their place and, as it were, with their eyes. This is no argument for leaving them as they are. It is our bounden duty to do [illegible] condition of humanity, since under more favorable conditions it will grow to greater beauty and glory. All that it

should do is to keep our hearts from breaking at the sight of distress and poverty. For we may be so saddened by these as to lose heart and to give up the endeavor to alleviate poverty and to uplift the poor.

Nor should it be forgotten, as we regard the sorrow of the world—*that there could scarcely be capacity for sorrow unless there also were capacity for sorrow.*—I am disposed to think that a sorrowless world would be a joyless one. If there be joy in possession there must be sorrow at loss. It is for things we hold most dear that our sorrow at their loss is most acute. Where the light is strongest the shadows are deepest. The natures most capable of mirth are most capable of pathos. That prince of mirth, Thomas Hood, is as great a prince of pathos. From the same mind we have the "Winds and Oddities" and "The Song of the Shirt," and those unexcelled lines, "We watched her breathing through the night." Indeed, in one of his poems he says :

> There's not a string attuned to mirth
> But has its chord in melancholy.

Mr. Lowell, who gave us the "Biglow Papers," brimming over with wit, has also given us the unsurpassed ode on the death of Lowell. So far as this world is concerned the loss of the power to weep would not be an unmixed gain, for we should probably lose at the same time the power to laugh. The elfin may look with unmoved countenance on the coolest scene, but then he will be also unmoved by the deepest of earth's sorrows. The eyes that beam with joy are those that overflow with tears. The heart that thrills with gladness is the very heart that may be broken with grief. The land that has the loftiest and grandest mountains is, of necessity, the deepest and darkest valleys. I would rather journey through a country in which I must climb the greatest hills, even though I may have to descend into the deepest valleys that lie between, than a monotonous level country like our near county of Essex.

> This truth came borne with bier and pall,
> I felt it when I sorrowed most.
> 'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all.

Sorrow, which, of course, springs out of the capacity for sorrow, is a sign rather of the goodness than the malevolence of Him who constituted our

nature. When we think hard thoughts of God, because of the sorrow that shadows the world, we surely charge God foolishly.

Nor must we forget to observe this—*Much, very much, of the misery of the world is not in any real sense chargeable upon God at all.*—It lies at the door of *man,* not of *God.* If from the misery of the world be deducted all that springs out of the folly or sin of man, the mountain becomes almost as a mole hill—*e. g.,* much of human misery is found in the diseases which darken and give anguish to so many lives. But disease is not in the original constitution of humanity. God made man perfect not diseased. Disease, all disease, I believe, springs directly or indirectly out of the carelessness or folly or the sin of man. Vice is the chief parent of disease. Any candid physician will tell you that to it can be traced, actually traced, fully half the maladies he has to treat. Violation of the moral laws of God gives rise to most of the baleful and worst diseases of humanity. One of the greatest surgeons of the day has affirmed that he can trace in the formation of the teeth of little children the results of vice in their parentage three or four generations back. Is it right to charge such results on the all-wise and all-loving Father-God? A sinless world would, I believe, be a world of perfect health. Or, take the epidemics which from time to time ravage whole districts. Whence do they come? From heaven? Assuredly not. From filth or folly. Whence came the cholera that raged last autumn in Toulon, Marseilles, and many a fair city of Southern France? From the open and filthy drains of the great arsenal of the French people. Whence came the last attack of that fell disease in [illegible] the East of London. One of my earliest recollections is of the cholera epidemic of 1849. My native city was ravaged by it. I can clearly remember being sent along with my brothers and sisters, out of the city to escape the infection. Whence did it come? From the open channels in the streets, into which the drainage ran, so that the city was called the English Venice. That visitation brought about a sanitary revolution, and cholera since then has been quite unknown there. It is commonly believed that certain diseases, such as measles, are inevitable to children. Never was there [illegible] A [illegible] physician proved some time ago the utter fallacy of it. He showed that there were many races among which [illegible] and that there was a time even in England when [illegible] Where they now prevail [illegible]

peoples they have been imported by civilized settlers. These are not, as they used to be called, visitations of God; they are the outcome of human folly. They spring from the infringement of Divine laws. They are penalties of such infringement, intended to force us to obey the laws of purity and cleanliness.

Or take, if you will, the calamities which arise from the outburst of the great forces of Nature. You say there are the earthquakes which desolate great tracts of country and whelm great masses of the dwellers in them. These, you say, are not due to human causes. True; but two things must be borne in mind. The first is that they are confined to certain districts which are few and far between. The whole earth is not volcanic. There is plenty of space in the world for men to dwell where they would be quite safe from such overthrow of property and person. A great earthquake is surely like a voice from heaven saying to the inhabitants: "Depart hence." But men will not depart. They cling to the old spots. Not long ago Casamicciola, in the Bay of Naples, was well-nigh destroyed by earthquake. We should have thought that henceforth the place would have been avoided as too dangerous for human habitation; but it is not so. I believe that the overthrown buildings have been restored and are now inhabited again. Vesuvius has again and again belched forth its lava and ashes and destroyed the places within a radius of many miles; and yet not only around the mountain, but even creeping up its sides, are seen villages crowded with dwellers. If in these places earthquakes should again be felt, or over them a lava stream should flow, is it fair to charge their destruction upon the Most High? You might as well charge upon Him the death of the foolhardy skater who ventures upon the thin and yielding ice. Or turn to the sea, from which there is constantly coming stories of vessels and men whelmed in its waters. Are these to be charged upon the Great Father? How many of them are due to badly-built, or overladen, or undermanned vessels? How many are due to the fact that they are sent to sea when every weather warning says that storms are imminent? How many are due to the fact that the vessels are of too slight a build to stand the stress of storm and wave? Owners could be named whose record shows that they have rarely, if ever, lost either a vessel or a crew.

not be stained by the awful loss of life with which they are at present.

Or take the existence of poverty in the world. Men talk as if this

were due to the insufficiency of the Divine supplies; as if the earth did not bring forth in sufficient abundance to meet man's needs; as if there were not space for men on the earth; as if God gave us with a niggard hand, as if it were necessary to be stinted, to all men liberally—place them in small ones to space. The earth is careless to the remuneration of labor, as if it were unwilling to repay the husbandman for increasing her supplies! A single seed of corn rightly used would soon provide sufficient for all the needs of the world. The gardener is often troubled by the prodigality of Nature. Whence, then, comes the poverty? From the selfishness, from the love of hoarding of too many of the rich, and from the carelessness and improvidence of the poor. Let the rich use their wealth as stewards for God, and let every man labor and toil, and poverty would almost cease.

Were men to one another
As kind as God to all,
Then no man on his brother
For help would vainly call.

On none for idle wasting
Would honest labor frown;
And none, to riches hasting,
Would tread his neighbor down.

And so, if time permitted, it would be possible to go over every dark page which makes it hard for men to believe in a gracious Father, and show that such pages can be read in a very large extent, to be charged, not upon Him, but on the folly, or sin, or selfishness of man.

But, it may be said, after all deductions have been made, the world presents many a sad page which seems to cast a lasting shade over the brightest scenes, often double whether in Him there be a ready loving heart. And so, it may be asked, why could not these facts be rendered impossible? Why could not the misery of the world be brought to an end or rendered impossible? Why could not every trace of anguish, or pain, or sorrow be wiped out from human history and then be for ever prevented? So far as I can see this would only be possible under two conditions. One is *that each being should be a separate and distinct creation*—unconnected with all which preceded and all that will follow. For, of course, much of the anguish of the world is the result of inherited nature. Disease passes from parents to children through many

generations. Character is propagated in the same way. Both the good and evil elements live on from parent to child. It is thus in both the animal and human kingdom. If this is to be prevented, it could be only by each being a distinct creation, with no ties either to the past or the future—each creature fresh from the hand of God. But would not the loss outweigh the gain? For the loss would be of all the sweet and gracious associations between parent and child, between friend and friend. Society would be impossible. In its place there would be a collection of separate entities. Homes would be no more. In this respect, I, for one, would rather bear the ills we have thereby to others that we know not of.

But this is not all. Much of the misery of the world is the result of our human liberty. Man is free, and so he can wander from the true path for his life. He may choose the way of death rather than of life. But if all evil is to be prevented it can only be by the loss of liberty. Freedom means the possibility of going wrong. Wrong can only be rendered impossible by the deprival of liberty—the most precious of the Divine endowments to men—an endowment which renders man like unto God.

This is the chief sense in which man is fashioned in the Divine image. When God made the world He fixed it under laws from which it could not break; but when He made man He made it impossible for him to break the laws of his being. God *commands* the universe; He speaks in tones of entreaty or persuasion to men. How different in the pages of Scripture God speaks where men and where Nature are concerned! When God created the sun it was impossible for that sun to resist the law of the Most High. But when He made man, He rendered it possible for that man to say to His clearest command "I will not." Sin, with its train of anguish and pain, is one of the fruits of this high prerogative. It is a terrible price to pay; but I dare to say not too great for the priceless boon. For if our liberty were to be broken away, if we were driven, like mummies within the Divine hand desired, the light and glory of humanity would depart, I say, deliberately, better all the sorrow of the world than to be like dumb driven cattle before our Maker.

> Those ills that mortal men endure
> So long, are capable of cure
> As they of freedom may be sure;
> But that denied, a grief though small,
> Shakes the whole roof or ruins all.
>
> —HERRICK ("Hesperides")

If [illegible] prepared [illegible] your birthright for such a mess of pottage, I am not; and if you did, like Esau of old, when too late you will find no [illegible] me of the gracious and wise intent of the Most High. I look at Nature [illegible] fection of all her work. All seems holy because it is perfection. I look [illegible] the vastness, the magnificence, the order of the universe. I look out on human life and society, and I see everywhere the tokens of a loving [illegible] here and there I see dark spots which I cannot understand; but I let [illegible] spots, and I say: "Since I find love and care in the general plan of Nature, I will, I must believe, that even in these dark things there is some [illegible] I shall see that He doeth all things well." And I am quite assured of this, as I hear the voice of Him, whose voice to me is as the voice of God, [illegible] very hairs of your head are all numbered."

Oh, yet, we trust that somehow good
  Will be the final goal of ill,
  To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
  That not one life shall be destroy'd,
  Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete:

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
  That not a moth with vain desire
  Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold! we know not anything;
  I can but trust that good shall fall
  At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every Winter change to Spring.

ENTHUSIASM.

BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON FARRAR, D. D.

Preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, July 26, 1885.

ROM. xii. 11.—"Fervent in spirit."

"Utopian," "Quixotic" and "unpractical," it is one of the mudbanks
the dawn bursting over cold, gray lives; what they wished for was the
could give. And their attitude of mind is always the attitude of the

ers of abstract truth, and blind authority keeps beating with its crutch the child that might have led it.

Now what is enthusiasm? *Enthusiasmos* is a Greek word. It means the fulness of Divine inspiration; it implies an absorbing, a passionate devotion to some good cause; it means the state of those whom St. Paul here describes as "beyond" literally rushing on spirit, as does even the meanest and most ill-taught of men when transformed, uplifted, elated by the spirit of God. When a man is an enthusiast for good it is because a Spirit greater than his own has swept over him, has thrilled into his consciousness the conviction of shrinking truths, has made him responsive to multitudes, has made him as a flame of fire which keeps up among dying embers, as a wind of God which breathes over the clay that they might live. Without enthusiasm of some noble kind a man is dead, and without enthusiasm a nation perishes. All such men it is true that in proportion to his enthusiasm is the grandeur of his life; of such nations it is true that with or without enthusiasm it must rise as we will, and must rest the penalty to remove the heavy burden, to atone for the intolerable wrong.

There are two forms in which enthusiasm has appeared in human souls—the enthusiasm for humanity, and the enthusiasm for individual salvation. The latter, which is the narrower and more selfish of the two, has led to many errors. Men ready to sacrifice everything in order to secure their deliverance from what they dreamed of hell, have, like the hermits, lived in deserts or mountains, or have shut themselves in monastic cells, or have subjected their bodies to cruel tortures. The beliefs that have led to such lives are natural to men. They are found in every religion, and every nation in the world; and deeper as these are entangled with error, more strange is the union of ancestry and of selfishness, the deeper also have been their results. Sometimes on the other hand, the enthusiasm for humanity has been dissevered from deep personal religion, and in these cases while like charity, we may hope, that God will bless the sincere lovers of their fellow-men. But when the two have been combined; when the sense of devotion has been united with the exaltation of charity, then such men have ever been the most glorious and most blessed among the benefactors of the world. What was Christianity itself but such an enthusiasm? Learn from the example, caught from the Spirit of Christ the Lord, the same love, even for the guilty and the wretched which brought the Lord Jesus step by step

from that celestial glory, down to the lowest depths of that infinite descent, was kindled by His Spirit in the heart of all His noblest sons. Forgiven, they have longed with others to share the same forgiveness, and they have been ready to die all, and to place all for His sake who died for them. What else was it but this burning enthusiasm which drove Paul, who calls himself "the least of the apostles, not meet to be called an apostle," to work more abundantly than them all? What else put this enthusiasm wrong from him the cry which had shocked the religious sensitiveness of his more commonplace Christians, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for the sake of my brethren"? Again, and again this Divine fire has died out of the world, again and again has it been rekindled by God's chosen sons. What would the world have been without them? Ask what the world would be without the sun. Without the sun the world would relapse into a chill and ice waste: without the sun, with the fire of God burning in their hearts, the moral, the spiritual world, yes, the whole world of man would sink into a universe of death.

Think what enthusiasm has done even in the lower spheres which are not immediately related to us. The enthusiasm of the student, of the artist, of the discoverer, of the man of science—what else could have inspired their infinite patience and their unlimited self-sacrifice? Men cannot greatly serve mankind for nothing. Extreme lovers of their country have rarely been happy men, in the world's sense. They have usually had to suffer in proportion to their nobleness. The progress of mankind, it has been truly said, has been from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake: but men animated by a fine enthusiasm brave these penalties. It plunged Roger Bacon into torture and imprisonment; it made Columbus face the terrors of unknown seas; it caused years of poverty, of suffering, of persecution, of ignorant calumny to Galileo, to Kepler, to Newton, to the early geologists, to Charles Darwin. They gave to mankind a real universe and infinite, and if in these days men pass and fits power has grown, his skill, and makes fire his tool, and in the vessels of iron will, it is only because philosophers sages have, for his sake, out-worked the stars. And what supported them? The inspired enthusiasm, the heavenly-eyed spirit which prefers labor to sloth, and love to selfishness, and truth to falsehood, and God to gold.

Then there is the enthusiasm of the reformer. Think what nations would have sunk into if their best men had not again and again been

Italy was fast becoming when Savonarola, until they choked his voice in blood, thundered in the Duomo of Florence against her corruption and apostacy. Think how the cramp of an intolerable sacerdotal tyranny to give to the people of England their first English Bible. Think what truths would have been drowned in deep seas of oblivion if Huss had not ded the perjured Sigismund. Think what a sink of abominations the nominal Church of God might now have been if the voice of Luther had never shaken the world. Think how the Church of England might now be settling on her knees, if in ages when corrupt and avaricious Churchmen were sating their greed with her revenues, and many even of her bishops were leaving over their dioceses the trail of their shameful nepotism, such men as Wesley and Whitefield had not driven their fellows back to the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus. Churches and nations need many resurrections, and Churches and nations were freezing into apathy and stagnating into pestilence when, in the person of those enthusiasts, God once more made of the winds His angels, and of the flaming fires His

Then there is the enthusiasm of the missionary. In the first centuries the world was full of missionaries. In those days every Christian looked on it as a part of his life to be God's missionary, and for centuries the Church produced many a noble missioner—men like Boniface, men like Columban. Then, for one thousand years, began the ages of neglect, of darkness, of priestly superstition ; and there was only found here and there a man like St. Louis of France, or St. Francis of Assisi, with the mission spirit strong within him. It is to Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians that we owe the revival of missionary zeal. In the last century missionaries large vocabulary of words with which to quench the spirit which is so dangerous to his domain. When the poor cobbler, William Carey, pro- that if God wished to convert the heathen He would doubtless do so in His own way; but how glorious an example have the great workers in

the wild forests of America and among their wilder denizens, with the words "Not from necessity but from choice, for it seems to me that God's

Think of Adoniram Judson and the tortures he bore so cheerfully in his Burmese prison. And we, too, in these days have seen bishops more like unto apostles than peers. We have seen Charles Mackenzie leave the comforts of Cambridge to die amid the pestilent swamps of the Zambesi; we saw in imagination the body of the young martyr, Coleridge Pattison, floating, with his palm branch of victory in his hand, over the blue sea among the Coral Isles. Nor do I know any signs more hopeful for the nation than these, that our public schools are now founding missionary chapelries in the neglected wastes of London, and our young undergraduates are working in Whitechapel and Bethnal-green, and our young athletes and cricketers are going out as poor men to labor in China and Hindustan. What is it that can sustain them? It is an inspired enthusiasm; it is the fervency of spirit which the Spirit of Christ their Lord inspires, the fervency which scorns luxury and pours silent contempt upon gold.

Think, too, of the glowing and beautiful enthusiasm of our social philanthropists. Who can measure the good done by St. Vincent de Paul when he founded his Sisterhoods of Mercy? What man has done more for multitudes of souls than John Pound, the poor Plymouth cobbler who,

ragged schools? What a light from heaven was shed on countless

wasting their lives in the street, and he tells us: "As I asked, 'Can anything be done?' a voice answered: 'Try.' I did try, and see what God hath wrought." Who can tell the amount of misery rolled off the sore heart of the world by the reformers of prisons, John Howard and Elizabeth Fry—Elizabeth Fry entering the foul wards of the women with no

Europe, as Burke said, to dive into the depths of dungeons, to plunge into the infection of hospitals, to take the gauge and dimensions of misery and oppression and contempt. Who can at all estimate the blessings wrought by the enthusiasm of men like these? Most of us drowse and

ears and we heed it not; the wayfarer welters in his blood by the wayside, wounded and half dead, and after one cold glance we carefully pass by on the other side. It was not so with them. They did not ask "Am I my brother's keeper?" They did not talk, but acted. They did not sigh, but lit their lamps and girded their loins. They were not content to spend their lives in the stupid indifference of vulgar comfort or the dull apathy of indolent fatalism. Most men, whatever they may say, do not really care for the wretchedness of others. Many shrug their shoulders, and say, "Oh! it cannot be helped." It was not so with these men; they were like the lady in the fine old legend:

> She told him of their tears,
> And prayed him, if they pay this tax they starve:
> Whereat he stared, replying, half amused,
> You would not let your little finger ache,
> For such as these. But I would die, she said

In this Abbey, so rich in records of nobleness, we are surrounded by [illegible]. Very few of those who lie here were sluggish comfort-mongers or vulgar hunters after place. There was one great curse which, in spite of Christianity, had lingered on from century to century. It is astonishing, it is even terrible, to know how content men grow with the existence of long-continued evils; how consciences are dulled and blunted by custom, and cease to regard injustice as injustice, or crime as crime; how they even suffer accepted wrongs to put on the airs of abstract right; and so it was, [illegible] texts of which Satan always has a store at hand to quote for his own purposes, thinking that a scrap of Scripture can give men warrant for any traversing of God's eternal moral law, slavery was tolerated. Our luxuries in England in those days were supplied by slave labor; our lands were tilled by human chattels sold in open market by the stealers of men; and if any one protested against this gross iniquity, men told him that he did not believe in the Bible. Then God fired with His divine enthusiasm the mind of one man. It often happens that men of no exceptional powers, men in no other respects remarkable, have yet the moral genius of un[illegible] all subterfuges and all disguises. Such a man was Thomas Clarkson.

He had won a prize essay at Cambridge on the then open question whether it was lawful to make slaves of men or not, and he had argued that it was not, and there most men would have rested. "It is not right," they would have said, "but I cannot help it. It is not right, but how can I argue against so many millions?" It is no affair," they would have said, "of mine." Not so Clarkson. He rode from Cambridge to London, after reciting his prize essay, and his mind was disturbed by this question: "If it be unlawful, why is it a national institution? if it is wrong, why is not the system ended? if twenty or thirty millions of my countrymen are content to acquiesce in a crime, does that furnish me with any excuse for acquiescing in it?" At last, in a transport of agitation, Clarkson got off his horse and sat down on the spot where you will now see a little monument. There he argued the question out with his own conscience, and from that moment the young man made anti-slavery his profession, and devoted his life to wipe away so foul a blot from the annals of his country. For twenty years he struggled on, and for twenty years he braved hatred, slander, and abuse from those who maintained that they had vested interests in the curse and ruin of their fellow-men. For twenty years the newspaper paragraphs lied about him, and venal hacks got their penny a line for each lie, or perhaps more, if they could get more into a paragraph, and at the end of those twenty years he succeeded and he gave new life to England by striking a death-blow at England's crime. I know not why he has no memorial in this Abbey. He ought to have, and I hope that after these words he will have. In yonder transept lie Pitt and Fox and Wilberforce, who so nobly aided him. By the western door is the cenotaph of Zachary Macaulay, the inscription on which tells us that, with a perseverance which no success could relax, no reverse subdue, no toil, privation, nor reproach could daunt, he devoted his talents and fortune, and all the energies of his mind to the service of the most injured and helpless of mankind. In yonder southern transept you will see the tablet of Granville Sharp, who, founding public happiness on public virtue, sought to rescue his country from the guilt of using the arm of freedom to rivet the fetters of bondage, and established in the Negro race, in the person of his servant Somerset, the long-disputed right of human nature. Our triumphs over the combined resistance of interest, prejudice and pride.

On the great Western continent the same determined energy and

of people that they were wrong. In a very few years he had turned their made them law. Not all who worked with him were so free as he was from the use of wrong methods to bring about a righteous end. Some were stung into pity, into rage, and into indefensible deeds in consequence. Among them was John Brown. He was hung at Harper's

their efforts.

I do not know of one great moral or religious work which has been

us to smite their towering crests with all our power. One is drink. It is

the gaol of the felon, the cell of the lunatic, and the grave of the suicide,

combined. The other loathly fiend of our city life is uncleanness. It will

which have of late been thrust upon us, which we can no longer pretend to coolly and fastidiously ignore, we allow our streets to reek unchecked

than the human sacrifices of those who in old days passed their children "through the fire to Molech," the abomination of the children of Ammon. Every other curse—the bitter cry of outcast London, of squalid

of godlessness, the loss of the masses from Christian ministrations—springs from these two curses; like Aaron's rod, they swallow up all others. Are we to be such recreants, are we to be such cowards as from generation to generation to leave these arrows to rankle and gangrene in the heart of England? If the Parliament of England will not deal with them, and that effectually, and that without fear of men, and that without base tamperings with the unclean thing, and that speedily, and that finally, then the people of England must deal with them, if the people of England have one spark of ancestral manhood, or of ances-

tral virtue left, and must make Parliament hear their view and obey their will and register their determination. If the Church of England—and remember that, by the Church of England, I do not mean the twenty thousand of the clergy, nor the twenty millions of the laity—if the Church of England will not deal with these evils every saint of God must combine to deal with them. But I believe that the State or England will do its duty, that the Church of England is trying, and that all branches of the Church are trying and will try, though as yet with deficient force and with deficient enthusiasm, to do their duty. If not, if the Church of England does not do hers, woe to her! If she is to be bound by monopolists, if she is to cower before organizations, if she is to be cajoled by lobbyists, if she is to be bullied by self-interest, if she is to be blinded by stupid sophisms, and if she is to be dull and ignorant enough to be deceived by the devil when he dresses and disguises his own object with a text, it will be not long ere her golden candlestick is removed out of its place. If churches and sects could think less of their parties, and their sections, and their quarrels, and their ingle-nooks, and their religious newspapers, and more of their duty to mankind, it would be better. May God give us enthusiasts! May God give us saints! May God give us men—men who will care more and more for fundamentals, and less and less for inessentials—men who will care more and more for deeds of mercy, and less and less for shibboleths and ceremonies. Vast is the work before us. The Church has to win back the lost. She has to convert the unconverted, she has to grapple with the curses of lust and of drink. Her work is our work, your work, the work of every true man and woman and youth among you. Woe unto you, if you are the Church, woe unto England if our ears be too dull to hear the call! Woe unto us and woe unto you, if stultified by compromise, if seduced by pleasure, if engrossed by the love of money, if enclosed in your own fat, if with hearts, as Scripture expresses it, "Hard as the nether mill-stone," and "fat as brawn," we eat and drink and steal and lie and slander and covet in the world, and neither rise and go schools to strike one blow for the cause of Christ!

HOLY VIOLENCE.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN VAUGHAN, D. D.

Preached in the Temple Church.

ST. MATTHEW xi. 12.

"From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

ST. LUKE xvi. 16.

"The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

The two texts are more alike than the English version makes them. *Violence* is the key-note to the one line of truth. So strongly does that word mark the text from St. Matthew, that a hasty reader might almost imagine the verse to speak of hostility to the Gospel. "*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence*" might suggest the idea of threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord; and the following clause, "*the violent take it by force*," might seem to be the description of a siege or a storm, or it might be differently rendered as "*seize upon it*," or "*make spoil of it*," as the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the "*spoiling of their goods*" as taken joyfully by the disciples to whom that Epistle was written. But the second text precludes any such misapprehension. "*The kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it*." Still the same word—"*violence*" in the one, "*presseth*"—but with an unmistakable context which speaks only of friendliness.

Violence, then, is here for once a virtue. We must put aside all such associations with the word as the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the Prophets give us: "*The earth was filled with violence;*" "*God looked upon it, and, behold, it was corrupt.*" "*How shall I look upon thee? How shall I know?*" "*God shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.*" Nay we must forget the characteristic glory of the Redeemer Himself. "*He shall not strive,*

neither was any deceit found in His mouth." We must enter, as it were, a new province and region of divine morality, in which a virtue and a vice have for a moment exchanged names, and *violence* rather than *gentleness* has become the predominant feature of such as would be saved.

We have here one of those Scriptural paradoxes, of which another stands very close to it in the text from St. Luke, where the conduct of an unscrupulous agent is made to furnish a lesson, not of imitation certainly, yet not wholly of avoidance, to the disciples of Jesus Christ. The unjust steward showed even in his dishonesty a far-sightedness of prudence which it were well, our Lord says, if Christian people, without imitating the dishonesty, could always exercise in reference to their aims—their higher aims and nobler interests. It may be true, and certainly the statement would open an instructive discussion, that every vice is a perversion of virtue, insomuch that the perfect man would be he who, while he alters the direction, the motive, and the principle, yet refuses to suppress or to smother any one of the feelings or dispositions of which he is conscious, as having their root in the natural ground of his heart. But we have quite enough to occupy our brief time this morning in the single example given us in the text.

John the Baptist, the generous and intrepid herald of Jesus Christ, was now a prisoner, and soon to be a martyr for constantly speaking the truth and boldly rebuking vice. A momentary misgiving seems to have distressed him in his solitude, as it had never done in the days of his activity. He sends two of his disciples to Christ Himself with the question, *"Art Thou He that should come?"* A practical reply is given to the question, and the messengers are dismissed with it. As they quit the scene, Christ discourses to the multitude on the text of the Baptist and his work. He [illegible] mission. Yet there is a sense, he says, in which the humblest Christian is greater than that greatest of the prophets. John opened the kingdom of heaven to others, but he stood outside it himself. It may seem a strong and even a harsh saying; it ought, at all events, to elevate our conception of the privilege of being a Christian. It ought to make us ask ourselves in what sense it can be said of us, and how alone we can make it true, that we are greater men than the Baptist. The texts will help us to answer the question. They are in many ways very remarkable.

First of all, the ministry of the Baptist, short as it was in duration, and

apparently slight as it was as to any leading effects, made the turning-point of the dispensations: "*The Law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached.*" The spiritual history of the world was cast to retain by that brief mission. Again our Lord speaks of that mission as already a part of the past, almost of the far past: "*From the days* [He says] *of John the Baptist until now,*" and yet the fatal birthday was not yet come, the feast and the dance, the oath and the execution. Christ's ministry, the intervening forty days, the fatal oath, the sad feast, all, as it seems, suspended in a moment of prophecy, and viewed as by anticipation, having taken place. Once more, there is a height in the expression, "*The kingdom of God is being preached, and every man is pressing into it by violence,*" which makes it less the statement of a present and continuous and triumphant universality. It is not describing the way into Christ's kingdom as by the good Samaritan and others, as the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven—this is that tone of prophetic jubilation which breaks in so often upon the sadder themes of discourse as the Saviour recounts the miracles of the last conflict and the victory of the cross and passion. "*I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.*" "*The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified.*" "*I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.*"

But now we will fix all our thoughts upon that which we have called the key-note of the two texts, *the virtue of violence*, its place in the ethics of Jesus Christ, its bearing and keeping [illegible] dignity and of blessedness which is here, as it is so often called in the Gospel, "[illegible]." The kingdom of heaven suffers *violence*. Men of *violence* seize it by *force*. The kingdom of God is preached as glad tidings, and every man presses into the original *force* of his way into it. Such characteristics of the kingdom stand alone, not without contrast and counterpoise, in the Book of God.

Humility and patience [illegible] gentleness, [illegible] and charity are far more frequently than their [illegible] the subject of exhortation and praise. A religion of violence is [illegible] Mohammedanism and the Koran, a conversion which would seem [illegible] by force generally [illegible] the conversions of the [illegible]. And yet we may be [illegible] sure, if Christ said so, that there is a [illegible] and even a [illegible] which is an ingredient of the true religion, and the want of which is a serious and even fatal defect in the so-called religion of man. We will try to

draw the character of the *man of violence*, as Christ here introduces him, in two or three of his relations to the kingdom of grace. We shall see him most distinctly by setting him face to face with his opposite.

Evidently the violence which will take no denial, wins forces its way and storms the gate, and presses toward the goal, is naturally contrasted with a misplaced modesty, or hesitating indecision, or an insipid forbearance, or a vacillating double-mindedness, unstable in all its ways, and absolutely disqualified for a life inward and outward, for a life of resolution, effort, and enterprise. There are two or three chief departments of the life of the kingdom in which Christ encounters us, and in each of these the *violent* man and his opposite stand self-confessed.

The royal life, as we are here taught to call it—the royal life, or it would not be such, has to make sacrifices. There are obligations different for different natures which are incompatible with the new being. Toward them by their name, there are sins in all of us, pleasant, tempting delicious sins; or else insatiable, selfish, self-indulgent and even tyrannical sins. To the one class we may give the title popularly salutary of *sins of the flesh*, to the other of *sins of the spirit*, which cannot be retained if we would be sons of the kingdom. Comes to us now why Christ should make violence a virtue in respect to these? The violent man determined to take the kingdom by force goes to war with his sins, makes no excuses for them, never pretends to say that they are natural, or to say that they are natural, or to say that they must be gently worn away, or allowed time or age, or asked to hibernate for whatever of them remains, through the mercy of One who is very pitiful and of great compassion. He must be rid of them or he cannot enter heaven: therefore he brings the fire and sword of the new kingdom into their lodgments and into their encampments, burns and slays without mercy, as though they were his enemies, casts all from himself as far as is possible all that overtops and approaches of tempting, of unbecoming, of keeping: it involves surrender to them, nearly or completely, with them. "*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence*" of him, for he is a *man of violence*, and he will take it by force.

Set over against him in this respect the festive and delicate combatant, the man of silken mail and gossamer weapons, the man of assiduous visits, and easy manners and ready allowances; hear him in his secret chamber accounting to himself for his failures, excusing himself to himself for his inconsistencies, hoping against hope that the next time he shall do

better, living sometimes to harbour the peradventure that the tale of Gospel severity may be of little meaning, though the words be strong, that room will be found somewhere and somehow for a person like him, amongst the sturdier soldiers, who, perhaps, he says to himself, have had fewer trials or a stronger natural force of good. Then you will see why our Lord should make violence a virtue, and a sanctity have a vehemence which must hurl itself over holy impatience dwells with God.

There is a different province of the Gospel, big in it is that we, of morality commonly or Christianity to extent, but of faith. Every one knows, most not have felt, at some period of their lives, that the moral life is not easy in what it demands of the reason. It professes a revelation, pure and simple; in other words, an unveiling of secret things, a disclosure by God Himself of certain invisible realities which could not be ascertained without God's manifestation—as the beyond death, and some little glimpses of its nature; at all events, the one thought that a world to be a life lived in His presence, or a scene in which duties is not so, even for the Christian—this is one of them. A Divine sacrifice of saving and availing propitiation, the first moment, the necessity imputed, the method not explained, is another of them. A Holy Spirit, secret in its operations, real in its influences, appreciable in its effects, given in answer to prayer, grieved by sin, sealing the man for glory, this is another; and we might add to them. Now, the treatment of this professed revelation is very various. There is the *good* treatment, and there is the *wicked* treatment. There is the man who cannot hurry, and cannot be hurried, the man who reads what is to be read about it, and will give his judgment another day; the man who is all candour and frankness, sees so much on both sides and all sides if everything, feels the force of evidence, appreciates the character of Christ, acknowledges the adaptation of the Gospel to human need, would give so much—all, he says—to feel conviction and a firm basis; but, on the other hand, is so fearful of being precipitate, has seen so much of human exaggeration and brutality, feels so greatly the liability of mankind to enthusiasm and fanaticism in the erection of idols and the adoption of heroes, that he does not venture the bold plunge for life or for death, must yet wait, yet inquire, yet reconsider, and, having done all, yet wait; and thus it comes to pass, that if not against Christ, no one could possibly describe him as on the side of Christ: the weight of his example, of his speech, of his influence, is

for Jesus.

Now, can we not understand here again why Christ should make any man to believe first and then inquire. You know how plainly count the cost, let them come or not come, as reason and conscience and grace should decide them. Yet even in this most delicate, most difficult, most critical matter of believing or not believing, there is a presumption.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, if it is anything, is *a life;* it is not an opinion, it is not a doctrine, it is not a luxury or a superfluity; if it is anything, it is *a life;* its entrance opens a new being, it is the formation of new companionships and a new communion; it is the beginning of months; it is the setting out upon a course and a race, of which heaven is the goal; it is a putting off of the old self, and the investiture with that new man which was created once for all in the resurrection of Christ, but which has to be put on in doing and suffering by each one of His people. All this being so, it is folly, it is madness, it is suicide to leave the question of faith, or no faith, to settle itself by caprice or accident, or never to settle itself, while there is daylight to walk by. These matters are not for dreams, and they are not for death-beds; they are for the conscious waking thoughts of living and working men; they are for the life of the life; they are for the life above this life, which is also the

in the earlier, for the "*man of violence,*" who must and will settle the

come, or must we look for another?" Art Thou the desire of hearts and

still for my satisfaction till some other and more commanding voice shall be found to say to me, "Come, thou that art weary and burdened, and I will give thee rest"? The "*man of violence*" must have his answer, and when he has it he will know and he will confess, and he will do. The kingdom of God is his Gospel, and he presses into it.

There is yet one province of our kingdom to be briefly mentioned in conclusion, and it is that of devotion. Here, also, we see a wide difference between the "man of violence" and his opposite. There is a figure which we have all need under guidance of experience as well as of Scripture in reference to one's spiritual intercourse with the Master, it is the figure of wrestling. Jacob from the mysterious agony of Jacob's wrestling all night long at Peniel, exclaiming for us by the utterance Hosea in the words, "*He had power with the Angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto Him: he found Him in Bethel, ... even the Lord God of Hosts.*" It has passed into Christian phraseology from St. Paul's days to our own as descriptive of that earnestness in asking which will accept no denial, and which ventures even to say to God Himself, "*I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.*" Contrast with this vehemence and violence of supplication the so commonplace and the same timid, unthinking approach, the not realising of it, and the living under it, or the careless remembrance of every day and every evening to the end of praying, utters and urges nothing, supplicates in the old fashion, and goes on its way as it came, only done though the work still thirsts and the appetite. Now, which of the two think you is the true son of the kingdom—the man who suffers the fire and tempest of agony, the more overwhelming of inward difference to daunt him, or the man who thinks of the "*man of violence,*" of the Divine possible, and knocks on and prays on, and expects till the answer comes, and the day-star rises upon the heart?

The kingdom of God is preached, and the true man hears his own need of it. Sorrowful souls may be here, who feel with painful heat that they must be tried by this test, they can be none of Christ's. Constitutionally tempered by disposition, education and experience, rather inquirers than partisans, schooled into moderation in all things by observation of the falsehood, of the mischief of fanaticism, they find themselves incapable of that enthusiasm of devotion which has been made the meaning of the violence of these texts. Brethren, Jesus Christ

is never rough with any of us, but though meek and lowly in heart, nay, because He is meek and lowly in heart, He cannot excuse us from the [illegible] St. Paul calls "*the measure of the stature of His fulness.*" That which is lacking to nature is for that very reason the peculiar charge of grace. There is one cure for coldness—it is a sovereign remedy—it is the contemplation of Jesus [illegible] admiration till it grows into devotion, devotion till it grows into love. If we were cold before, [illegible] like Him at last, for "*we shall see Him as He is.*"

THE DUTIES OF YOUTH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. HARVEY GOODWIN, D. D.,

BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

Preached before the University of Oxford.

EXODUS XX. 12.

"Honor thy father and thy mother."

THE eighty-second Canon of 1603 ordains that the ten commandments be set up at the east end of every church and chapel where the people may best see and read the same. It is a wise, well-intentioned Canon, probably adapted to the wants of the period in which it was enacted. In our own days of cheap Bibles and cheap prayer-books, possessed, and, it may be hoped, read by all sorts and conditions of men, the Canon has somewhat fallen into desuetude, as was perhaps likely to happen.

But there is a rule in the Book of Common Prayer which has not fallen into desuetude, and which gives to the English Church and her teaching a peculiar emphasis to the ten commandments. In the Communion office these commandments are rehearsed by the priest and people kneeling: they are rehearsed one by one, and after each the people are taught to pray that God would "have mercy upon them and incline their hearts to keep the law" which their ears have heard. A very edifying method of listening to laws, specially to laws to which can be rightly applied the introductory language of the Priest, "God spake these words and said."

It would be in accordance with the critical spirit of our times to examine the laws of Moses, with reference to the claim which they may have to be regarded as a complete code of morals. Certainly, if taken in the letter they cannot be so regarded: we have the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself for giving to each literal precept a moral spiritual expansion. Murder is to include hatred without cause, adultery the lustful look, and so forth: the commands written shortly on stone are to be written in full on the fleshly tablets of the heart: and yet even so I do not

know that the ten laws of Moses can be regarded as exhaustive or as comprehending the whole department of morals. The criticism, which has been made, may be a true one, that while they deal with our duty towards our neighbor they omit the consideration of our duty towards ourselves. Be it so. I do not know that Moses himself would have regarded the code as complete; though it may possibly be argued that the foundation principle of all morals is to be found in the ten commands, and that he who would devise a complete scheme cannot do better than take his stand upon them. Without arguing this point, however, let me ask you to consider for one moment what a grand piece of legislation, for its own special purpose, the code of Moses was. It was a code, not devised for a people like ourselves, in the extremest condition of civilization, and in all the contrast of luxury and misery which civilization, as we call it, brings in its train; but it was a code delivered to a horde of emancipated slaves, living the simplest and rudest of lives in tents. And the two tables of stone were the first lesson-book of this ignorant people. The law which Moses gave was to be the charter of the liberties, the written constitution, of the newly-formed nation; the whole future of a people which was to leaven the world, was to be developed out of those ten commandments. And regarded thus we may say that they asserted such principles as these —(1) the unity, the omnipotence, the spiritual being of God; (2) the principles of the family, as involved in those words which I have taken for a text; (3) the rights of man, as hedged round by the commands which forbid murder, and theft, and adultery, and false witness; (4) the government of the will, the control of the passions, the command of self, as implied by the comprehensive precept not even to desire that which is not our own.

Now, I think that any one who will duly consider the matter will come to the conclusion that the principles which I have enunciated, and which undeniably lie at the root of the ten commandments, were just the principles which were necessary in the regeneration of the tribes whom Moses led out of Egypt; and it is for many reasons desirable so to regard them. The fitness of the commandments for their [illegible] help us to appreciate the wisdom which dictated them; but the teaching [illegible] Holy Scripture and the tradition of the Church alike attest to us that we should take a deeper and more comprehensive view. Christ came not to

destroy but to fulfil. God spoke by Moses; He spoke more clearly and more fully by Jesus Christ. The ten commandments are not repealed, their principles are immutable and eternal; the Church of England acts wisely in not permitting them to be abrogated or altered, or to be lost in dust and forgetfulness; but in pressing them weekly and week on the most solemn manner upon the hearts and consciences of her children. She is the wisest worshipper who most earnestly takes up the prayer, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these Thy laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee."

Yet I think it is obvious that there is much in the present condition of things, in the intellectual and moral tendencies of our own and other countries, which seems to throw doubt upon the wisdom of the Church, and to represent those who ask, on their knees, for grace to keep God's commandments as persons shy of strong light, not of fitness, but of weakness and superstition. The basis of the ten commandments is "God spake these words and said." If there be no God, as many seem to say, or if He be unknowable, as others tell us, or if God be merely a synonym for nature, then it is difficult to see how there can be any such thing as a commandment which it is binding upon the conscience to obey; and certainly the speculations concerning the being of God, which the age, and has for a long time been full, appear to me to have the practical tendency of weakening the moral character of law, which it is the duty of men, as men, to obey. Agnosticism, Positivism, Materialism, Atheism, can scarcely be contained within the bonds of polite philosophy. The mathematical speculator may possibly be able to do this: he may be able to go round to his own satisfaction, with as little emotion as he would point out the error of some new astronomical interpretation; but this sublime neutrality cannot be perpetuated amongst those who accept his views. To them the destruction of a creed may be the extinction of spiritual life and hope, and the assurance that there is no such God as He who spake by Moses and who spake again by Jesus Christ, will probably lead to the abrogation of the second table of commandments as well as of the first. The love of our brother may vanish with the love of God; indeed, it may be a more tempting thing to say, "There is no such person as my neighbour," than to say, "There is no God"; for the love of God may easily be forced away, so as to mean little or nothing, while the love of our neighbour entails very practical duties which it is more difficult to forget. And truly it has

go the whole length of abolition approximate to it. There is not a little in the revelations of the Divorce Court to show that another command-

esteemed than it ought to be, less current, I fear, than once it was.

Let me, however, contract my remarks concerning the ten commandments to those limits which seem to be imposed by the few words which I have taken for a text. I have been led to make some general

which we know as the fifth commandment.

to the law of God, from children to their parents. Any one who has

thank God! I have known of cases in which words that a Freshman has heard from the University pulpit have affected his whole subsequent life. I scarcely dare hope that any such results shall fall from words spoken here to-day—the result is so great, so unspeakable. Yet I think it can scarcely be without profit to some of you that you should be able to say in future days this one of the first lessons which you heard from the pulpit of St. Mary's, Oxford, was that you should honour your father and your mother. I wish I could impress upon you anything like my own sense of the depth and importance and far-stretching comprehensiveness of this simple old-fashioned precept. I have spoken of it to-day as involving the principle of family and of community therein, just two of those elements of elevation and improvement which were necessary to convert a multitude of savages and slaves into a noble nation of freemen. But the family principle is wider and deeper than this. It is God's own principle; it is just that which makes men to be men and not beasts. It is one of the divine charters of God given humanity; it is so solemn and sacred that neither time nor space can destroy it. It exists to show its strength and its vitality by exhibiting itself as an active governing power when a young man is away from his father and mother in his college rooms, and when he can forget them, or can be ashamed of them, if he pleases so to do.

Will you bear with me while I mention a few ways in which, as it seems to me, a young man at Oxford may honour his father and his mother?

A man honours his father when he devotes himself honestly to the studies of the place. The same studies do not suit all, and all men have not the same abilities. But I presume that no one is sent here except under the persuasion that there is some amount of good, improvable material in him. Now, every young man is bound to do his best in the way of self-improvement. He is bound to do this even on selfish principles. He will be very sorry ten years hence if he has not done so: but I should like to place effort at self-improvement upon the high and happy and holy ground of honour due to parents, a requiting of love by loving industry, a feeling that this will please those who on their part have done and loved so much. To lead an idle and unprofitable life is a breach of the fifth commandment, as well as being bad in itself.

Then, again, a man honours his father by habits of economy and frugality. Sometimes, to my knowledge, there are cases of men living in a way

at Oxford or Cambridge while their parents are stinting themselves at home in order that their son may have a University career. This is shameful as well as dishonest. It may also be said to offend against the eighth commandment as well as against the fifth. But, putting such cases as these out of view, a young man whatever his circumstances may be, is put upon his mettle here in the expenditure of money, as well as in other things. Nothing is easier in a measure to own than a special more than you have—or, if there be any difficulty, those miscreants money-lenders who ply their exact trade with such constancy and activity will soon get rid of it. Ay and there are men who through their whole subsequent lives suffer the shame of youthful extravagance. But I am not now looking forward to the future; it is the present with which I am concerned—a present which is watched from a distance by father and mother watched with that intense earnestness and anxiety and love which fathers and mother hearts make possible: and I say concerning this, that carelessness about money is cruelty to parents.

Once more, the young man's supreme duty of keeping his body in soberness, temperance, and chastity may be rightly regarded in the light of honor paid to father and mother. The keenness which can be inflicted on a father's heart comes from this side. A son honors his parents when he keeps himself pure, when he strives against temptation—when he prays for help against sensual sin. But especially I would ask you to regard the duty and the blessedness of purity in the light of honor done to a mother. He most truly and completely honors his mother who honors womanhood; he is now searched who shrinks from profaning a sister by an impure look, or word, or deed; he honors his mother who avoids like poison anything which, he knows or feels, might bring a blush to her cheek or cause a pang to her heart.

Viewed in this way, I think that the words, "Honor thy father and thy mother," are about as good a motto as any young man could hang up in his rooms or (if he would not like to make them so conspicuous) as he could carry about in his breast. And one chief point in the argument is this, that the father and mother are, by hypothesis, absent. It is not the behaviour in the presence of parents, not the conduct at home in the midst of the family, which is in question; but the sacred influence of those who are far away and only present in thought and in prayer. Which consideration leads me to remind you that a young man at college has those who,

as his present guardians, are said to be *in loco parentis*, and who, as much perhaps, may claim a share in the results of the fifth commandment. The Church Catechism, as you will remember, with what may perhaps be thought a boldness of interpretation, teaches the catechumen to say that in the ten commandments he learns amongst other things "to order himself lowly and reverently towards all his betters": and I conceive that a reference must here be intended to the precept which bids us to honour our parents. Some little time ago there was a controversy in one of our Northern newspapers concerning these words of the Catechism. It was contended with some warmth, that one person was not better than another, and that any reference to "betters" was contrary to the great and sacred principle of human equality. This view was in its turn opposed, but it was forgotten on both sides that the Catechism is a manual of instruction for persons of twelve, thirteen or fourteen years of age; and it certainly seems more hard to admit, without trenching upon the delicate question of human equality, that persons of such an age may speak without loss of self-respect of "betters," to whom it is right that they should "order themselves lowly and reverently." May I stretch the limit of age so far as to make it include young men at college? And may I suggest that it is a wise and justifiable extension of the fifth commandment if we make it include tutors, heads of colleges, and all others in authority? These are in the parents' place; they ought as such to have something of a parent's honour. I saw in *The Times*, a few days ago, the death of my old college tutor. Fifty years had not wiped out the remembrance of his fatherly kindness to me. If ever one man loved and honoured another I loved and honoured him.

The fact is, that honour to parents is only the principal and most important application of a general principle, which is abundantly recognized by all teachers in the school of Jesus Christ. An Apostle says, in the broadest manner possible, "Honour all men": and again, "In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself." There is no crouching and cringing and tuft-hunting in such precepts as these, or the conduct which they enjoin. It is only the manly expression of a mind which knows its own poverty and infirmity better than any one else can know it. I spoke of the language of the Catechism as adapted to the young; but the language of the Apostle admits of no such limitation, and, indeed anyone who has looked into his own heart will have found there more evil than he dare believe of his brother, and so each may honestly think his brother

to be loved than myself. Therefore, I should be disposed to press up to you invisible and the disposition to regard others as your betters, as worthy. I am, still more, young men, chiefly of those who are saluters of Christ and have been signed with the sign of His Cross. Indeed, a university is the last place in which men should be ashamed to thank themselves from themselves. In a university, one feels that we are to be the athletes in the feats, competition is the order of the day. Seem not proud, my dear young men, that all men are not equal; for one is which strongest, much cleverer, much more cultivated than another, and the most ignorant man in a university studies and university appreciates, or without grudging and without any mean, selfish spirit of envy or jealousy, to give honor to those who we feel and know are better than ourselves.

He who accepts the teaching of the New Testament, who recognizes the authority of Jesus Christ our Lord, and who, therefore, desires to follow the example of Him who condescended to exhibit a human life of filial love, will have no difficulty in acknowledging the supreme character of the command to honor father and mother. May I suggest to you that the difficulty or authority of the command seems to find its demonstration in this—that the honor due to parents is a distinctly human conception? Here is nothing like it so far as I know, among the beasts. Parental affection has its type in the instinct which teaches a mother to her young; but I know of nothing in the lower creation which in the least resembles the honor paid by a child to a parent. Nor can you put the duty upon anything like the basis of a mathematical demonstration. It seems incapable of proof that the mere imparting of life constitutes a claim to honor and respect; and doubtless there are cases in which the transmitted curse of an evil life seems to wipe out all claim to honor and love. There are cases in which (according to the proverb used by the children of Israel in Ezekiel) "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." But the human heart feels the necessity of returning love for love, and the love of the child developes easily with the honor and respect of more advanced years; and when love and duty are formulated by a definite law, whether by Moses in the Old Testament, or by Christ and His Apostles in the New, the human judgment yields assent with all the strength of positive conviction.

Lastly, and lastly from the conception of love due to father and

mother we rise (as it seems to me) to the conception of the love due to God. The command not to make any image to represent God, not to bow down to, or to worship, or use in swearing, the name, contains a host of less positive commands. Can it seem to me to call in aid of the impressive injunctions to love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength. Yet this is the one and only command. How shall we reach it? By our heavenly progress will we melt the cold, hard letter of duty into the warm, tender principle of love—worship and love? I believe that in this respect the first commandment is much indebted to the second, which is like unto it: "Honour thy father." We may rise from the conception of human fatherhood,

> Men may rise on stepping-stones
> Of their dead selves to higher things.

And so, when God permits us to call Him our Father, the clouds which conceal Him from our sight seem to break and vanish, and we feel that we can love and honour Him, not merely acknowledge Him, and refuse to accept others beside Him, not merely fear Him as the powerful to be safely set at nought: not merely philosophize about Him, and try to express His Existence in some scientific formula of human words. No; but love Him as a father ought to be loved—with all our hearts, and souls, and strength: trust Him as a father who knows our wants and infirmities, and is willing to supply and sanction them: open our hearts to Him in prayer, saying, "Our Father, who art in heaven"; above all, recognize Him as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in Him, and through His mediation, has adopted us in the highest condition of sonship, and made us heirs with Him of eternal life. "Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Where is that land? It is not here. It is the land which is very far off. But we shall one day see it: we shall one day possess it: and then, in the presence of God, and in the fulness of the sonship with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we may hope to know completely what the honour due to a father means.

THE SIGNS OF CHRIST'S COMING.

BY THE REV. FRANCIS PIGOU, D. D.,

CHAPLAIN TO THE QUEEN AND VICAR OF HALIFAX.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, May 10, 1885.

2 THESSALONIANS ii. 15.

"Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle."

poor would not work, but expected to be maintained in idleness and indolence by their richer brethren, and [illegible] never anything else but idle, spent their time as most idle and unoccupied people do—in tittle-tattle and gossip, and in prying and impertinent curiosity about their neighbors. To all such as these, St. Paul very wisely says: "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands [illegible] that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and may have lack of nothing." [illegible] always be found to be very near each other in all ages. They would not [illegible] Christ; they took up with some form of sensational or eccentric phase of religion, they laid themselves open to any fanatic or impostor who might work upon their credulity. Against this feverish, restless, marvel-loving, [illegible] people of his day not to be "soon shaken in mind," but to "prove all things," to "hold fast that which was good." He points out the signs which will undoubtedly and [illegible] precede the second coming—namely, wickedness, as evidenced by [illegible] and a sinful humanity, as shown by "the man of sin" sitting "in the temple of God." And from this we may surely see that [illegible] Paul must have been in full sympathy with the disposition, which has not died out amongst us, to regard ordinary and common events as precursors of the second coming. He evidently spoke after the mind of Christ Himself, who Saviour [illegible] His disciples against [illegible] "wars and rumors of wars," "pestilences and earthquakes" as the precursors of His second coming—not because they are physical events which cannot fail to arrest the mind of a thoughtless world, but simply because they are in themselves [illegible] common and so ordinary, because they belong not peculiarly to one age but to every age; and that so long as the world lasts we must expect these things. For that very reason they could not be looked upon as premonitory signs. If we had a thing [illegible] to be just these occurences and these events which fill the mind of the present day

and from which no age is altogether exempt, then do you not see for yourselves how soon all faith in that second coming would die out of the world [illegible] upon [illegible] and interpreted [illegible] signs of His coming, prediction would be constantly falsified?

On the other hand, there were evidently not a few then, as there are now, who spoke with bated breath after this wise: "From what Christ said Himself, we thought that He would return very soon, but we wait, and we wait, and He does not come." The world is growing gray; it goes on its goddy round; men eat and drink, they buy and sell, they marry and they are given in marriage as if there was to be no end of all things; they fall as leaves quickened by the autumn winds from what Bacon, in one of his essays, describes so exquisitely as the ever-green tree of humanity, and we tread them under our feet in graveyards and crowded aisles. The resurrection men say, "May it not be, after all, already past? There is so much imposture abroad, and there are so many weak and credulous persons, that is it not, therefore, after all, possible that the words in the Bible may have had a meaning put upon them for which there is no justification and no warrant; and is it not the more safe, as well as the wiser course, for me to believe absolutely nothing that is not evident and capable of demonstration, or to believe as little as I can possibly help believing? Or, if I cannot utterly discredit scripture, nor take upon myself to say that what seems to be predicted shall never, at any possible time, come to pass, may I not safely relegate the fulfilment and the verification of these predictions to some far-off future that I need not trouble myself about?" There is not, perhaps, much to choose between the attitude of those who, unwarrantably expecting Christ, live a life of inaction, and those who, relegating it to some distant future which relieves them from all concern about it, live a life of indifference as to when it shall come. On the one hand, the Master bids us live as not knowing at what hour the Son of Man cometh; and on the other, St. Paul, while deprecating that rash and inclusive interpretation of passing events which too often discredits the great Book of prophecy in many minds, gives to the Church of his day (and shall we not say to the Church of our own times?) certain unmistakable prognostics by which, I suppose, we can be no more deceived upon this subject than not to know that summer is nigh when the fig-tree putteth forth its leaves.

Now, Scripture, within its own pages, far removed from all fanciful

interpretations, furnishes us with certain signs, precursory and premonitory, of a character, if you look into them intelligently, wholly and utterly different from "wars and rumors of wars," from "pestilences and famines in divers places," and these of a nature not ephemeral nor local, but such as require long reaches of time for their development, just as in the natural world creation was not the result of a day, but of successive acts of creation spread over large and lengthy *æons*, or, as you see, how peapods before your eyes are being slowly formed into the coal beds for the future race. That is to say, that certain events must take place, not so much common to their age, as that they imperatively require, it may be, centuries for their development and their fulfilment, and, as they are developed in successive years, are to the succeeding age and generation, to those who have eyes to discern them, not lost, but a continually-sustained and increasing evidence of the greater nearness to us of our blessed Saviour's coming. Within the ordinary limits of a sermon it is, of course impossible to do more than touch on these, and one which will commend itself to your minds is that of which the prophet Daniel long ago spoke—the increase of knowledge, together with the restlessness of mankind. "Many shall run to and fro upon the earth, and knowledge shall be increased." Now, is there not a most marked increase of knowledge in every department of learning in our time? Is not the popular cry of this nineteenth century, for the more general and widespread and thorough education of the masses? Even our Charity Commissioners are laying hold of the surplus funds that have been the accretion of years, and appropriating them to the purposes of education. Look at the impulse given of late years to the Board school system. How rare it is for us to meet, even amongst the poorest of the artisan class, with any one who cannot read. Does not restlessness characterize our age? Consider our means of locomotion—the rapidity with which we pass nowadays from place to place, and our impatience if we are five minutes late. It took a great explorer two years to go round the world, and now we compass the globe in three months; we pass from the metropolis of Scotland to this, the world's centre, in ten hours, and our forefathers took so many days to do the same journey. The prophet Daniel was not wrong. Another reliable sign which the Scriptures point out is the eventual restoration of the Jews to their own land. You have only to read the articles in *The Jewish Chronicle*, their recognized organ, to see how the eyes of the whole world

of the Jews in their dispersion is now directed towards the Holy Land. But this restoration cannot take place until the nation at present in possession of it be dispossessed. A remarkable movement is going on amongst God's ancient people. Societies are being formed for the purpose of encouraging colonization. We have had a Palestine Exploration Fund. The eyes of the whole Jewish world are being directed to their old inheritance. What is meant by that expression, "the drying up of the Euphrates," if it is not the gradual dismemberment and disintegration of that empire which is at present in possession of the Holy Land, in order that the Jews may return to their own inheritance? What makes the historic question of Jewish interest so prominent? What makes the slow but gradual advance of Russia such absorbing interest to the student of the Bible, if it be not the plainest fulfillment of the unanimous utterance of the prophets, that the great power of the North, which was to invade and if possible overrun the Turkish dominions? And, my Christian friends, the question of interest to the politician, whatever side he may take, does not detract from the investigation which the student of prophecy may give apart from politics upon the same topic. The politician and the student of the Bible view the signs of the times, but they look upon them in a different light. And the fourth circumstance is one of which we hear so often. "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find ——not as we translate it in the older version, "faith"—but as we correctly translate it in the Revised Version, "the faith on the earth?" St Paul alludes very plainly to this, he speaks of "the mystery of iniquity" already in his day, as working; and a mystery is explained as the fuller development, but to be one that is not now, as distant, so future, so concealed and so hidden as impressively to demand swift destruction. He says that "that day shall not come except there be" an apostasy or "a falling away, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

Well, what are we to understand by this expression, "the man of sin, that opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is worshipped: so that He as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing Himself that He is God"? Without attempting to give any lengthened evidence in support of what we are saying, we may at once state that what we render, "man of sin" is the Greek word *Anomia*, which, as the Bishop of Winchester has long ago shown, means "lawlessness." Our best scholars have long pointed out the incorrectness of the received translation, and the Revision-

sts have adopted this the more accurate, in the Revised Version. *Anomia* s a word used in the New Testament sometimes with reference to false religions, that is to say, to religions which do not allow or give any place to what we understand by revelation. It is used at other times of those who do not submit themselves to the powers that be. It is used of wickedness in some of its more shadowed and roosting forms. In our childhood's days we were accustomed to hear this apostle applied to the Papacy or to some one Pope in particular; but the Church of Rome, as a Christian community, is not distinguished by "lawlessness." All the predictions with reference to Christ's second coming seem to point forward to some disturbed and disquieted condition of society, to an apostasy or departure from the faith, such as should be, as well as test, the faith in God's elect, and for whose sake those days should be lengthened, lest the strain should be too great. They foreshadow a spirit of lawlessness which shall foster and gather into such a head that nothing short of Divine interposition shall effectually stultify it. "The Lord shall consume that wicked one with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming." Strong language. St. Paul knows that when Christianity was little more than fifty years old this antichrist was at work. Is its energy exhausted? On the contrary, is there any one who thinks it more needful to-day to caution men than what is understood by the lawlessness of our age? Are all classes of men practically impressed with it? Let us begin with the lowest rung of the ladder. Are the revolutionary sentiments undermining to an extraordinary degree the very fabric of society? What turbulent elements like lava are simmering beneath the crust of our social life, and finding vent, from time to time, in some violent and desperate deeds on the part of Nihilist or Fenian, or through those secret societies which, to compass their wicked ends, are utterly reckless of innocent lives. Our age has been called *par excellence* the dynamite age. Does it not seem as if a mighty weight of *anomia* were passing over all nationalities? Is not the independence of the youth of both sexes confessed and striking enough to make their grandfathers turn in their graves? Is it not the age of self-pleasing and of increasing love of self, which St. Paul long ago foresaw and foretold? And need we put an erroneous interpretation upon this expression, "man of sin," and apply it to a Pope, when we find a truer interpretation of it nearer home?

Take, again, the domain of science. Is it true, or is it not true, that among some of our leading scientists there is a marked and painful absence of the recognition of a great first cause? Ours is an age of marvelous discovery, and of mechanical appliances, so that we have an Exhibition of Inventions. Mind is ever making fresh conquests over matter. The great forces of nature, once so dreaded, are being now so brought under our control and pressed into our service, that we can even compel a Nasmyth hammer to be our plaything and our toy: and just in proportion as force is being brought under control, and machinery in our great mills becomes almost automatic, we have that which is invariably bred of town life and factory life, commonly called secularism, that is to say, that God is forgotten and ignored in the world of our looms and in the potent power of our steam: and as the constancy of Nature is a reliable basis of successful experiment, and the natural philosopher depends for his happy illustration upon the unbreaking constancy of nature, so any interposition of God in the form of the operation of a higher or unknown law is scouted as impossible, and a miracle is ridiculed as a thing simply incredible. In all the papers read at a great gathering of scientists of late, and in the discussions which followed, not the faintest allusion was made by reader or speaker to the existence of the active presence of a God who was working behind the phenomena of force. And in this idolatry of force, in this worship of law, in this ignoring of a great first cause in that domain of knowledge which, if anything could do so, ought to lead to a recognition of Him who is above all and through all and in all, have we not another striking illustration of St. Paul's prediction—something nearer home than the Vatican?

I pass on to the third and last illustration of this spirit as it exists in the domain of religion. What a marked and growing impatience there is in our day of creeds or anything akin to it—nothing so dogmatic in religion. Is not the great cry and the popular cry for unsectarian soul teaching? Is not the saying common enough, "What does it matter what a man believes so long as his practice is right?" as if a man's convictions do not always affect his practice. Is not there a growing tendency to undervalue and reject dogma founded upon a sharp distinction between the intellectual and the emotional parts of human nature, to separate religion from theology, and to cast even primary truths into the crucible of human reason? The "lawlessness" which lay at the root of Gnosticism in the first century is

revived and worshipped by its disciples in the more modern guise of Pestalozzian Agnosticism, which, in other words and plain English, [illegible] believe in what we do not see. Is not there a drifting away from the old and safe moorings of Catholic truth, and a putting out to sea without [illegible] may in the end wreck us upon the bleak shore of unbelief? Is it not so, that the great masses in our [illegible] are [illegible] under the influences of [illegible] passing rapidly into [illegible] spiritually of mind, [illegible] to [illegible] ance one with another—all these, and many more which might be named, are grave and serious facts which we cannot afford and cannot affect to [illegible] to try God's elect at the last will not be Atheism, of which we know the [illegible] teenth century garb, not Romanism, whose errors have been over and over again exposed, but that it will be a spurious, vague, indefinite Christianity, an *olla podrida* of creeds, a kind of Liebig's essence from which [illegible] and which shall be uninfluential just because it is not definite, powerless because it is itself wanting in the secret of power. In this process of refining away, an impatience of dogma until men shall begin to ask, What shall I believe in? In this cry for that education which leaves a third part of human nature untouched, and allows our children to grow up around us, in some cases, amid scenes of vice, without those early lessons which can be their only safeguards; in the hopeless compromising of [illegible] apparent unity; in the subordination of faith to reason, of the soul's truest instincts to intellect; in that love of self which necessarily shuts out the [illegible] itself into secularism; have we not a growing evidence of the correctness of St. Paul's description of the latter times upon which our lot is cast? If

this expression, "the man of sin," admits of the interpretation I have put upon it, and the fuller development of lawlessness is to precede Christ's coming, then we may ask, Is it not to be discerned as working in our midst in our own generation and times? And that being so, what part shall we, who by our presence in this grand old Abbey make some pro- [illegible] upon the case? It is doubtless very true, that the Church of God has no real cause for fear; thus far it has outlived all hostile assault coming from whatever quarter; it has weathered out many a storm, and it now rides bravely upon the crested wave, whilst many schools of thought have sunk hopelessly beneath the water: it has, like our Bible amidst general literature, a charmed life, and, like the Indian maiden's lamp of love upon the Ganges, keeps unquenched its light. The Old and New Testament sparkle with pledges for its security as the firmament is irradiate with stars; but upon us the shadow of the setting sun of this dispensation is surely fast falling. It does not do for us glibly and indolently to say, Christ's Church is safe; we know the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. We have our *rôle* to play, a side to take, a cause to espouse, and never, never did the Church of Christ more need her living witnesses, and more need to listen well and wisely to the dignified utterances and the calm counsel of her great Apostle than now.

And now I would say, if you are to bring, as we ought each of us to do if life is worth anything, the influence of our separate personality upon the world for good, we must never fall short of settled conviction. Divine truth is attainable if a man seeks in the right way. Sometimes quietly and thoughtfully ask yourself whether you be in the faith, for you cannot but know. Are you a sincere and earnest believer yourself in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you resting upon Him and upon His all-sufficient atonement for your personal salvation? If summoned hence ere another day comes, could you say, "I know in whom I have believed"? Do not keep saying to yourself, as so many do, and hence their instability and lack of influence, "I think I hope, I trust I believe," for that is not anywhere the language of God's reconciled children. Your creed must be something more than a passing opinion—it must be heart and soul conviction if it is to do you or any one else any good; for until you have your feet upon the rock, and the witness within yourself that you are a reconciled child of God, you are as yet at the

mercy of false teachers and false Christs, as the straws in our streets are at the mercy of every gust of wind. And hold fast to what you have been taught years ago by sainted mothers' lips, or by those whose memory you revere and cherish, though they have long ago passed from this scene. Ask yourself sometimes: "As a wise man, shall I rightly, readily, fearlessly abandon all my cherished convictions for some new and unexamined and untried teaching, however recommended it may be by profoundity of thought or corroborated by the least of all reliable tests of truth—the evidence of sincerity? Shall I, without reserve, give ear to those who would disparage or decry that faith which has grown gray with years which has enlightened, cheered, comforted and sustained the saints of God in all ages, and carried them over the waters to the other side—that faith in the survival of the fittest which, as it has survived, bears all the stamp and the imprimatur of its truth?" Oh, Christian hearers, anchor your souls with a grip tenacious upon the Rock of Ages which has been deep and immovable underneath the dark and unquiet waters of human thought and speculation, and say, "Here do I hold, testwith all the strength of my spirit or personal conviction until some safer anchorage for the soul of man be found, until this rock be removed." Remember, too (I speak as having made science my life pursuit and hobby), that there is a devout and reverent study of science which, so far from excluding God from His works, sees

> Books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything;

that there is a keeping of His commandments which makes obedience to human authority, natural and facile; that there is a humble, child-like submission of your intellect and your powers of mind and higher faculties which is for you both more blessed and more restful than a proud, defiant rejection of revelation can ever be; that there is a sober, devout, believing use of missions in which you have the sole safeguard against what is false or exaggerated or sensational in religion. And surely we believe, from the experience that has been given to us, that while, undoubtedly, large blessing does rest upon a soberly conducted parochial mission, yet I am more and more persuaded that we should not need a mission or those revivals, which are never altogether without their danger if not

people would use the ordinary means of grace more believingly, and if they would only listen more intelligently to the voice of God in the Church's accustomed and faithful ministrations.

And then, remember also, that the true preparation for Christ's coming is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. The love of God is the love of goodness. Recognize and rejoice in good wherever you meet with it. The world is growing in our day heartily sick of controversy in the presence of unbelief and nothingarianism. Thoughtful men in our days are becoming weary of the estrangements within the fold of the Church of Christ. The world is too full of sin, of ignorance, of sadness to allow of our quarreling with those who, loving the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, do not see their way altogether to worship in our form of ritual. We can all pray for a wiser, larger, more comprehensive spirit, which should, at least, rob controversy of much of its asperity, and prevent inevitable differences of opinion from ever becoming the occasion of personal antipathies or denominational estrangements. It is possible to hold fast to cherished convictions without any grave compromise of principle. We can worship God in our own way without being at hopeless issue with the non-conformist. Alas, for our common Christianity! We mistake for, or we deal with one another too often as foes when we might be warm allies against a common enemy. And remember that the love of God becomes real by doing good, otherwise it degenerates into a sickly sentiment. The love of God is the love of man expanded and purified. Pray in your secret prayers that there may be so shed abroad in your heart the love of God in Christ that your life shall be a consecrated one, for it is consecrated influence that we want in these times. It is not by unnatural, forced efforts, as a rule, but it is by the life hid with Christ in God that men outside shall become impressed with the reality of religion. Consecrate your gift of title, of rank, of wealth, of time, of personal influence, and bring that consecrated power to bear upon the hearts of others; for the eloquence of a holy life is something irresistible. The golden age lies onwards. We long, not for the Church of the past, but for the Church of the future. True preparation does not consist in asking when He shall come, but in striving to be like Him in daily self-denial, which is the grand teaching of the Cross; in the attainment and possession of that spiritual faith in which

which is to us the pledge of God's help and favor, and in the work for Him as we can do it, and as He may call us to do it, which brings us into closer contact with the sadness, and the sickness, and the weariness, and the wants of this world, and makes Christ more real to many in an hour all the creeds which we have ever recited. Thus waiting for Him, and working for Him in that work which brings the soul's best success, and where it is best done speeds His coming; so we end with what St. Paul himself says to us: "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

THE DISCIPLINE OF SUFFERING.

BY THE LATE VERY REV. A. P. STANLEY, D. D.

DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.

Preached in Calvary Church, New York, October 6th, 1878.

JOB xxxvi. 2.

"Suffer me a little, and I will show thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf."

THE Book of Job is full of interest from beginning to end, but the pith and marrow of the book is contained in the later chapters, after the long controversy of Job and his three friends is finished. Job, feeling that he was right and they were wrong, breaks out into the cry: "Oh, that One would hear me! Behold, my desire is that the Almighty would answer me!" That cry was heard; the words of Job were ended; the three friends were silenced. But there had been another spectator drawn to the scene of sorrow. It was the youth Elihu. He had heard both sides. He had waited until all had spoken, with that reverential deference which in the Far East marks the conduct of youth toward age, and now he could restrain himself no longer. He was "full of matter"; the spirit within him constrained him to speak that he might be refreshed. He opened his lips and answered: "I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid and durst not show you mine opinion." He then, with hesitating, and hesitating accents, often difficult to understand yet tending to the same end, entreats them to listen to him for he speaks in and for a higher power of wisdom than his own. "Suffer me a little, and I will show thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf."

Some have thought that the character of Elihu was introduced into the Book of Job at a later time to clear up an enigma. At any rate his part is like that of the wise chorus in the Grecian tragedy, like that of a judge balancing an argument of a contestant's cause. Gently, calmly, without vehemence, without anger, he turns the attention of the patriarch from himself and his sufferings to the greatness and wisdom of God. "I will

answer thee that God is more gracious than man: "Why dost thou strive against Him, for he giveth no account of any of His matters?" And then he rises into a stratum higher and higher. He gives a comparison of the good and the evil in this life, and begins to speak in clearer and clearer words of God in creation. And now there came a final confirmation of what Elihu had said. Whilst he yet spoke the earth trembled and was moved out of its place. There was a roar of thunder; out of the storm came a whirlwind, and out of the whirlwind the Eternal said: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? . . . before that display of the Divine power the proud spirit of the ancient patriarch was bowed down, and he said: "I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

This is a brief summary of this wonderful book. Let us draw from it its chief practical lessons. They are four in number—four lessons on the perplexities and problems of life. First, the wisdom put into the mouth of Elihu when the three friends had failed, reminds us of what we are taught elsewhere in the Bible, that there are times when personal authority must give way to truth, when he who is young may instruct those who are aged, when out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has ordained that very strength which the world most needs. That deference to age and authority on which the three friends insisted is indeed a general rule both of sacred and common life, and unless it were so experience could never be formed. Society would always be dissolving, and teaching and acting would lose that stability which is the only guarantee of progress as well as of permanence.

But notwithstanding, the doctrine which is so beautifully shadowed forth in the appearance of Elihu was this, that each generation must learn not only from that which has gone forth but from that which is coming after it. The rising generation for aught we know has some truths which the older generation may have failed to apprehend. Even a child can instruct its elders by good example, by innocent questions, by simple statements. Elihu was young, and the three friends were very old, yet to him and not to them was intrusted the message pointing to the true solution of the great difficulty that perplexed them all. It was, indeed, no new truth which he put before them, but it was for that very reason there was the

receive it and apply it; so to put forth truths that they may in a succeeding age wear a new aspect, because God entrusts to each generation certain truths to carry out wisely and usefully. So again and again new life has meanings into ancient creeds, new applications of most venerable truths. Every fresh generation has something of this kind to tell us. Every young man here present ought to bear his part in endeavoring to purify and elevate the mission of his city, of his country and of mankind. The younger nations are called to supplement the work of the older races; we may apply the words of a well-known English statesman, "the New World is called into being to redress the balance of the Old." God grant that this new world may not fail of its mission from any narrowness of view, or dimness of insight, from any false shame or any false presumption!

Secondly. The Book of Job impresses us that there are problems beyond the power of man to exhaust, and that in the certainty of that uncertainty it is our privilege to rest. The human mind, it may be well as before a confessed and discovered truth. The error of Job and his friends was that they thought to measure the counsels of God, Job complaining that because he was righteous he ought not to be afflicted. Elihu on the other hand, in the face of the whirlwind, declared the Almighty "is excellent in power and in judgment and in plenty of justice He will not afflict." He will not afflict without need, and in that power and justice and in [illegible] than in His mercy and love, let us place our absolute confidence. God, as the old proverb says, never smites with both hands at once; and one He stretches to inflict, [illegible] behind to bless, to heal and to purify. We may rest assured that His Divine mind has a purpose, even though we do not see it.

And how is this truth enforced on Job? It is by the unfolding to him all the wonders of the natural world; to him as to all the Gentiles the [illegible] seen chiefly through the creation of the world. To us, indeed, a far [illegible] us to confirm our faith it would not be so much on the wonders of nature as on the still small voice of the Gospel, and of the spirit which tells us

that by the life and death of Jesus Christ the counsels of God and the claims of men have been reconciled.

The Cross of Christ on Calvary is a pledge to us that the deepest suffering may be a condition of the noblest blessing, the sign not of God's displeasure but of His noblest tenderness, most compassionate love. Still, though we have learnt this truth above the need of Elihu's ancient mission, yet a description of the natural world is often the best guide to us and the more so because our view of nature is so much fuller and vaster than it could be in the days of old. In the primeval ages of the world the fiery horses of the wilderness, the monsters of the Egyptian Nile were more wonderful and were much more dwelt upon even in the Bible than the sweet influences of the Pleiades or the bands of Orion, even more than the water course, more than the roar of the thunder, or the wave of the lightning. But to us who have been taught the immeasurable distances, the incalculable magnitude of these heavenly bodies which to the patriarchs seemed only to be twinkling points in the framework of heaven, to us who have been taught the beautiful system and arrangements of those movements of cloud and storms which in those old times must have seemed like sudden shocks and isolated convulsions—to us the argument and closing speeches of the Book of Job are strengthened a hundred fold. We know that what we see is but the outskirts of creation, and the Power which rules this vast universe must be beyond the reach of our farthest imagination. Whatever else the discoveries of modern science teach, they teach, at least, this—the marvellous complexity and unbroken order of the material world.

They indicate to us how vast is the treasure-house of resources by which the immortality of each spirit, the inter-communion of spirit with spirit and all with God may be sustained in a higher form, far beyond the reach of our thought or of our knowledge. Now we know, in part, and see through a glass darkly, but that infinite immensity in which the Divine presence dwells, and into which, as we humbly hope, we shall pass after death, we shall know even as we are known. A famous English philosopher dear to this Western world, Bishop Berkeley, whose footsteps and whose relics the traveler follows with increasing interest at Newport at Hartford, at New Haven, and famed echoes of whose name have reached, I am told, even to the shores of the Pacific, has described a comparison which occurred to him in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. He saw a fly

crawling upon a pillar, and he says: "It requires some comprehension in the eye of the intelligent spectator to take in at one view the various parts of the building in order to observe their symmetry and design; but to the fly, whose prospect was confined to a little part of one of the stones of a single pillar, the joined beauty of the whole or the distinct use of its parts were invisible, and nothing could appear but the small inequalities on the surface of the stone, which in the view of that insect seemed so many deformed rocks and precipices." That fly on the pillar in St. Paul's Cathedral is indeed the likeness of each human being as he creeps across the vast pillars which uphold the universe. That crushing sorrow which appears to us nothing but a yawning chasm or hideous obstruction may turn out to be the joining or cement that binds together the fragments of our existence into one solid whole.

That dark and crooked way through which we have to grope in doubt and fear may be in the sight of a superior intelligence but the tracery of some beautiful [illegible] of the plan of some majestic arch. Everything which enables us to see how the universe is one whole; everything which shows to us that man is bound by subtle links with all other parts of creation; everything which tells us how many of the miseries of the world and the wretchedness of improvidence, of intemperance, of sensuality, are also fatal breaches of the fixed rule of nature; everything which confirms us in the belief that the revelation of the Infinite and Divine is not confined to a single race or church but pervades more or less all the religious institutions of mankind; everything which impresses upon us the continuity and unity of the Divine and Human, of the sacred and profane—everything which teaches us any of these lessons brings us into the frame of mind which the Bible and experience alike impress upon us as the one thing needful for the first principles of true religion.

And this leads to the third lesson contained in the last words of the Book of Job: "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." He was called from dwelling on himself and his own virtues to feel that he was in the presence of One to whom all earthly intelligence and wisdom seems insignificant. It was the same truth to which his friends had vainly endeavored to bring him, but could not because, as it so happens with speculative arguments, they combined it with a contradiction from which his conscience and reason revolted. He was living in the assertion of his own innocence. His friends the night these calamities were judgments on

his sins, yet still he was at last brought to confess that he had not thanked God. All these calamities are sent to us, and how do they tend to bring us to take a serious and solemn view of our mortal condition. They bring us into the presence of Him before whom we must feel our sin and infirmity. When we think of Him from whom nothing is hidden and in the light of whose countenance our secret sins are set, it is no mock humility, it is no self-inflicted discipline, but the unconstrained expression of our most enlightened convictions of duty, correctly and in regard to dust and ashes.

No doubt there is the consciousness in human nature that we are made in the image of God. We are the masters of our own destinies; but still upright character of which he is represented the type. A high-souled voice of his heart, and not only in moral matters but intellectual matters also we learn this need of humility. How often do we hear ignorant, in the presence of the great oracles of wisdom, in the various branches of We all of us, in all professions, sacred no less than secular, need the ourselves by every light that can dawn upon us from the past or the present, from Heaven or from earth.

And lastly and fourthly, this sense of the vastness of the universe and the imperfection of our own knowledge, may help us in some degree to understand, not, indeed, the origin of evil and suffering, but at any rate something of its possible uses and purposes. We look around the world and we see cruel perplexities; we see the useless remain, the useful taken away, the young and the happy depart, the old and the miserable linger on. We see happy households broken up. We see the failure of those to whom we have been accustomed to look up with reverence. We look

on and we go through these trials with wonder and fear. We ask whereunto this will grow. Yes, but that has been gained perchance which nothing else could have given us. We may have gained through these [illegible] ours. Truths, which once seemed to be mere words uttered without understanding, may have thus become parts of our inmost life. In times past we could say, "I heard of God by the hearing of the ear," but now we can say, "My eye seeth Thee." Humility for ourselves, self-abasement [illegible] which often are the best results of distress, of doubt and of difficulty.

May I close these remarks by an illustration which I once heard from the lips of a rough seafaring man—one of few survivors of a great shipwreck which took place some ten years ago in the Bay of Biscay? As [illegible] in the small boat in which they had taken refuge, in the midst of the [illegible] sweep of waters, but from the angry breaking waves which, from time to time, descended upon them, and against which every eye and hand had to watch with unabated attention. As the shades of evening drew on, so the survivor told me, their hearts sank at the thought that in the darkness of the night it would be impossible to see these insidious breakers, and that sooner or later they would be caught and engulfed by them. But with the darkness there came a corresponding safety. Every one of these dangerous waves as it rolled towards them was crested with a phosphorescent light which showed its coming far off, and enabled the seamen to guard against it as carefully as though they had been in full light of day. The spirits of the little crew revived, and those who from time to time—the cowards and desperadoes among them—were for turning back to the ship, were guided by these coruscations through the night, and in the early dawn they caught view of a distant vessel by which they were at last saved.

Mark that crest of phosphorescent light, On the top of those breaking [illegible] In the darkness of this mortal life, and on the wave of this troublesome [illegible] living with them in our own hearts. [illegible] ment and vexation [illegible] which reveals the

peril, and shows the wave and gurbs as through the cruelly stream. Out of doubt may come faith, out of grief may come hope, and to the upright and godly disposed there rises light from darkness. With each new temptation there may come a way to escape, with each new difficulty there may come some new explanation. As life advances it does indeed sometimes seem to us as a vessel going to pieces as though we were only broken fragments of a ship or a solitary skiff on the wide waste of waters; but so long as our moral existence lasts we must not give up the duty of hoping. The sense that kept us back in youth from all intemperate gladness—that same good instinct forbids unprofitable sadness. We must persevere until the morning breaks. That speck on the distant horizon may be the vessel by which we will dispose our course. Forward, not backward, must we steer. The speck becomes a mass, and the mass becomes a ship. Have patience and perseverance, and believe that there is still future before every one, and so we shall at last reach the haven where we would be.

CHRISTIAN BURIAL.

BY THE REV. F. LAWRENCE,

VICAR OF WESTOW, HON. SEC. OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNERAL AND MOURNING REFORM ASSOCIATION.

Preached in St. Cuthbert's Church, Carlisle, on Sunday, September 28 (Church Congress Week).

HEBREWS ii, 14, 15. (*Revised Version.*)

"Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

which wraps itself up in the present; and in so far as our funeral observances tend to produce this result, so far do they need to be reformed.

Each day well lived is an epitome of life. We rise every morning to a new life: a life wrapped up in a new day, yet full of the richest promise. We thank God for raising us up to a new day—a new life. We ask Him to guide and keep us all the day. We go forth to do our duty in that state of life to which God has called us. We try to glorify God and His Christ, and to abide during all the hours in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. We strive to bless and help our brethren. And so the happy day runs its course, and at last we commend soul and body to the keeping of Him who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. We ask forgiveness for Christ's sake, and we lay ourselves down—and what? We lay ourselves down, and, in a sense, we die. Verily, every night we die. "Sleep, death's twin-brother." God in His infinite love has given us many rehearsals of death, and our prayer every night is—

> Teach me to live that I may dread
> The grave as little as my bed.

Some [illegible] bids us put our house in order. That we have done every night. We are [illegible] ready: there's nothing to [illegible] all the [illegible]. This is our song: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." And who knows upon the further shore to-day for us? Even Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath overcome the sharpness of death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. So at length we fall into the last sleep, to wake in Paradise.

"There is no death; what seems so is transition."

"The Christian man hath three friends—himself, his God, and the Angel Death."

Death, then, being the beginning of a higher life, what should be our funeral observances? There must be real heartfelt sorrow on the part of those who are left behind—for this is natural and Scriptural. But, instead of the unmeaning pomp and dismal pageantry of processional paraphernalia, and the conventional exhibition of extravagant fashionable mourning attire, which involve unprofitable expenditure, rather severe hardship upon persons of limited means, and neither mitigate grief nor manifest respect for the dead, there should be the exercise and outward manifestation of the three Christian principles—Faith, Hope, and Love.

Faith prevents excessive grief. Faith in God the Father,

> Whose love is as great as His power,
> And neither knows limit nor end.

Faith in God the Son, who hath made known a full and free salvation to all who truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel, and who through death had brought to naught him that hath the power of death. Faith in the Holy Spirit, whose fruits are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Oh, the boundless love of the Most High! It is He who gave. It is He who hath taken away. Shall we not add, "Blessed be the name of the Lord"? To yield to inordinate grief were to dishonor God. Faith in God and zeal in the work which God has given us to do on earth will make the poignancy of our grief to pass away.

Hope inspires an expression of brightness in the midst of sorrow.

If there were no Hope, it were fitting to cover everything with black, the symbol of despair, and to carve upon the gravestone the inverted torch, the symbol of extinction. But, thank God, there *is* Hope. Christ came to bring life and immortality to light. The soul of the departed one is in the loving keeping of Him who hath the key of Paradise. The body that we lay in the grave in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is in the loving keeping of Him who hath the key of the grave. So we use flowers, which we cull from our own gardens, emblems of the infinitely varied and tender love of God; emblems, too, of the Resurrection. And we sing a psalm or a hymn. And we do not place over the grave the pagan urn, nor the broken column, nor any costly monument—for, is not death the great leveller?—but rather some simple symbol instinct with Christian intention and expressing Christian Hope.

Love manifests itself toward the departed, the bereaved, the bearers, the neighbors and poorer brethren.

Love for the departed loved one suggests that regard be had to his wishes with respect to the avoidance of all ostentatious and expensive arrangements; that the greatest reverence be paid to the body; and that, whenever possible, relatives or immediate friends perform the last offices, and bear him to his tomb, as "devout men bore Stephen to his burial;" that no attempt be made to preserve the body, and that there be no brick grave or vault, but that the body be placed in the simple earth, to return

naturally to the earth, whence it came—"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust": reminding us of God's primæval sentence, "Unto dust shalt thou return."

Love to the bereaved suggests that there be no intrusion upon their sorrow, that friends meet at the church or cemetery rather than at the house of mourning, and take no part in feasting and treating before or after the burial.

Love, or consideration, for the bearers suggests that the body be not kept too long, and that the coffin be made as light as possible, and that, unless there be special reasons, there be no metallic or leaden coffin.

Love for the neighbors and poorer brethren suggests that simplicity, economy and good taste be observed in every detail. Recognizing the fact that ostentation is repugnant to the higher feelings, the rich would think of others when they bury their own dead, and would prove, by their example, that the exercise of economy is no evidence of want of respect or of love; and instead of lavishing much upon coffin, funeral ceremonial and mourning apparel, they would show their respect for the dead by some gift which would benefit the living, some gift to God's Church, some gift to His poor.

Where the tyranny of custom is so well established, as in the case of Funeral Ceremonial, it seems essential that those who see the need of reform should unite in an organization for spreading their ideas. It is easy to object to propagandas and societies; but to practical Englishmen no other way has occurred of carrying out a desired end. Hence the existence of the Church of England Funeral and Mourning Reform Association, which was formed at a meeting held during the Congress week at Sheffield, in the year 1878, under the presidency of the Bishop of Sodor and Man, upon the proposition of Earl Nelson, seconded by the Rev. Canon Erskine Clark, and supported by the Mayor of Sheffield, having for its object the promotion of a better appreciation of the idea of Christian Burial, by encouraging the adoption of such observances as give prominence to the Christian principles of Faith, Hope, and Love. The Society does not lay down laws; it simply offers suggestions which, if followed, would afford relief from much anxiety, difficulty, and expense. While it discourages ostentatious and expensive arrangements generally, mourning and treating, the use of crape, plumes, scarves, as also of metal coffins, brick graves, and other things which unduly retard the return of the body to the earth, it would yet have every effort made to mark the solemnity of

the season, and suggests the assembling at the church instead of at the house of mourning, the use in country places of a bier on wheels, or some such contrivance, whereby friends and neighbors may render the last offices, the singing of hymns, and the giving of alms to the poor, or making a donation to some charitable or religious work, as means of showing respect for the dead.

The funeral of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, who was one of the Presidents of the Society, was in accordance with these suggestions. The decoration of the coffin was done by his daughters; the body was moved to the churchyard upon a bier wheeled by humble friends; all the mourners followed on foot; there was no paraphernalia or parade of mourning; there had been early Communion in the church; the church was decorated with flowers by loving hands; the psalms were chanted and hymns sung; and the grave was lined with evergreens. The funerals, also, of the late Earl Grosvenor and many others had been marked by the greatest simplicity.

The Society was therefore able to congratulate itself upon a manifest improvement; but the changes were not wholly satisfactory. As the Archbishop of York said recently: "There might be a danger from another direction. He should be sorry if the poor came to feel they had not done honor to their dead, because they could not load and overload the coffin with flowers, and also crowd the church with the same vanity through beautiful adornments. The rule throughout should be simplicity."

Thus had the Society endeavored to promote a better appreciation of the idea of Christian burial. While, however, it put forth emphatically what it believed to be a true view of the relation of death to this life, in the case of the faithful humble followers of Christ, it was also solicitous to show forth the awfulness of death to the unrepentant sinner; and declared, with no uncertain voice, that to lose sight of the solemn warning, "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment," would be an evil of the greatest magnitude and fraught with the direst consequences. What the Society put forth for universal acceptance was that the death to be feared was the death of sin, but that the death of the body the true Christian need not fear. A Christian funeral should, therefore, in its ritual throughout, symbolize the Christian principles of Faith, Hope and Love, and thus bear witness, in the most effective way, to our emancipation from the fear of death by Him "who by His death hath destroyed death, and by His rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life."

THE GOSPEL AND THE MASSES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. FRASER.

LORD BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

Preached at St. Andrew's, Holborn, July 13, 1884.

ST. LUKE v. 1.

"The people pressed upon him to hear the word of God."

WHAT could have been this wonderful secret power by which the great Prophet of Galilee drew all men after him? We know, because the people confessed it with their own lips, that he spoke to them as one that had authority; and all people are not very ready to welcome those authoritative and somewhat dogmatic speakers. We know that he rebuked sin at times most sternly, and yet many of those whom he rebuked most sternly somehow could not resist the attraction to be among His hearers. He certainly was not one of those demagogues who pander to what people call the proletariat by denouncing the upper classes. A great French revolutionist of the last century (Camille Desmoulins, I believe) said that Christ was "*le bon sans-culotte.*" An accomplished peer in the House of Lords the other evening spoke of Christianity as the most perfect system of democracy; but if so it is a democracy with all its virtues developed and all its vices eradicated, such as this world, at least, has never yet seen realized. The Sermon on the Mount, which, I am sorry to say, I find is not so familiar to all people as it ought to be, tells us that the Christ did not pare down His doctrine to suit the passions of the mob. It was a Gospel for humanity that He preached, and not a theory of republicanism.

We can, I think – imperfectly, of course, but with some measure of accuracy – trace some of the elements of this power. One simple and very intelligible element of it was the way in which he recognized the wholeness of human nature, that, at bottom, the peer did not differ from the peasant, nor the monarch on the throne from the villager in his cottage. He recognized the wholeness of human nature, that great truth of which Paul after-

wards spoke, when He said that the Father of mankind had made of one blood all people that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. And not only did Christ recognize the wholeness of human nature but He recognized its many diversified needs. There are two kinds of physicians today—the specialist and the more generally trained physician. The one knows all the characteristics of one special disease. He has made it his special study. The other looks at men with a larger, more penetrating eye. Christ, the Great Physician, was not a specialist. He not only formed a true diagnosis of each disease, but he knew the remedy for the whole system.

Further, He was sinless—the spotless Lamb of God. "In Him," says John, "was no sin;" and he came to deliver the world from sin which was its one great primal curse—that which still presses upon it most heavily, and seems to make one almost despair of finding an effective remedy. He hated sin, and yet—and that is a strange thing—He never had a harsh word for the sinners, provided only that those sinners were not hypocrites. If they were, then He had no measure in His rebukes.

Once more. He had the tenderest feelings for those who had enjoyed the fewest opportunities. It is true that he recognized that great social law which sometimes seems to work so harshly, that to him that hath much more is given. Still, you will remember that other saying of His, "To whom little has been committed, of him little shall be required." That is a comfort, I think, when we look abroad upon these great cities, and see the depths of degradation in which, by the very necessity of their circumstances, so many thousands of our brethren and sisters are compelled to live by what we call, with a gentle euphemism, "our social arrangements," which should be rather called "our social disarrangements." Christ had, I say, the tenderest feelings for those who had enjoyed the fewest opportunities. As to the people, whom He taught and whom He described as sheep scattered upon the mountains without a shepherd, if they were ignorant, as many of them were, and if they were wayward, or hard to teach, as no doubt many of them were also, whose fault was it but that of the persons who had so long neglected them or had only taught them what had given them no real strength to resist temptation, and no guidance to walk in better ways?

And, once more, he recognized what I may call the natural or social wants which are common to all men. He would feed those five thousand men, and their wives and children, who had followed Him out into the far wilderness; He would feed them before he sent them away to their homes. He

would provide more wine for the innocent festivities of Cana. And, remember, that was not an orgie, but a simple friendly gathering of friends and neighbors met together on an occasion interesting to all. He would provide more wine at that festivity when the bridegroom's own scanty store was exhausted.

And yet, again, He disdained no man. Nothing could be observed in Him like the habitual conduct and deportment of scribes and Pharisees. The most needy had always His first care; and even women that had been sinners, the most outcast and debased ones of all, were not forbidden to approach Him and to express their penitence in their own simple natural way. These seem to me to be the really civilizing powers of the Gospel. It is thus, and no otherwise, that its teaching has the power of welding society together. I only ask you to think what society in England, in spite of its so-called civilization, would become if, I will not say the restraints, but the motives of the Gospel were withdrawn—if Christ's teachings were as utterly obliterated as if the waters of Lethe had washed them entirely out of men's hearts and memories.

And the power of the Gospel has been none the less because it has worked like the great forces of nature—not by catastrophes and cataclysms, but, so to speak, almost insensibly. You and I go about our daily work, whatever it may be, one after this manner and another after that; but if we had the Spirit of Christ within us, we should do that daily work in a different spirit from that in which we should do it if we had it not. And it is this little leaven working here and there which, I will not say leavens the whole lump, but which does exercise a restraining influence upon those who have it not, and sets up a higher ideal before the imagination of us all. It is thus that the Gospel of Christ has worked in many directions—for instance, in the direction of the elevation of woman. Some people think that, even yet, woman has not received all her full rights; but, at any rate, her position in society is recognized as being something very different from what it was in the days of Socrates or in the days of imperial Rome: and yet no one could put his finger upon the precise year or the precise century when this great change began to come about. It has come about insensibly, each century, perhaps, contributing something to the result as it has learnt more of the mind of Christ. So, again, it has been in the destruction of slavery, not fully wrought even yet, but accomplishing itself gradually in the ages according as men's hearts have opened themselves to receive what I have called the insensible teaching of the Gospel of Christ; and though some may be slow

to believe it, the power of Christ's Gospel is working still towards the great aim of making war morally impossible—that terrible scourge which we talk of lightly when it is at a distance, though when we are in the midst of it, we go about almost in sackcloth and ashes, weeping and gnashing our teeth.

Now, none of these things are done or have been done perfectly, but the lines are laid down. Every one who has an eye for such things can see them. The ideal is lifted up, and the human race, impelled by what I may call an irresistible moral force, is advancing—it will not stay steadily or without many retardations, but, on the whole, is manifestly advancing—in its higher and more enlightened conscience towards these goals. The world may never become perfect, probably it never will, but these are the aims of all its noblest hearts, and these are the objects which they are proposing to themselves.

A panic seems to have beset some sections of society, as though the people who pressed round Christ to hear him were pressing upon the hitherto privileged classes, and as though the old institutions of the country were going down before the rush. I thought it was a wise and well-spoken word that the Archbishop of Canterbury used in the House of Lords the other night, when he said, "Trust the people: give them their proper rights as citizens, and have confidence that they will not abuse them." It was a great and wise saying, also, of the late lamented Duke of Albany, in one of his last spoken utterances, delivered last winter at Liverpool—it showed an admirable "touch" with all the best aspirations of the age—when he said that society would move on both faster and safer if all moved on together. They were the last words of his speech, and they are worthy of being remembered by all. The privileged classes are afraid of the people. What did I see two nights ago? I went, as I suppose every visitor to London goes, to see that wonderful exhibition at Kensington. I saw in the grounds ten thousand people of all classes—at least of all classes who could afford to pay a shilling for their entertainment. Anything better behaved than those ten thousand people it was impossible to see. No rudeness, I need not say no drunkenness. One of the sights that touched me most, as I turned out of that beautiful street of Old London into the side alley, was to see a party of old women from Kensington Workhouse. They were not quite sure of their number. One said that there were eighteen, another said that there were nineteen, and another said that there were twenty. They were in their blue and white striped dresses, and were looking their very best and tidiest, with gladdened and wondering faces; and some kind friend had sent them to see

the marvellous show. On the same night ten thousand men and women at the east of London gave the heartiest of welcomes to the Prince and Princess of Wales; and those grasps of the hand which, I see, the Heir Apparent to the Throne is reported to have given to many who came into contact with him, will be remembered as a touch of sympathy between those who are at the top of the social pyramid and the thousands who make the base of it. No doubt there are forces full of mischief at work amongst us, and at times some sudden development of [illegible] startles us; and these many hopeful signs; but I confess for myself that I echo with all my heart the Archbishop's generous words, "Let us trust the people."

And we who stand up in pulpits, and call ourselves ministers or prophets of God, and presume to speak to men in God's name, cannot we do something more successfully than we have hitherto done to move and to win these people? I mean of this wonderful crowds who throng our fashionable churches, where there is either a gorgeous service or an eloquent preacher; but, though I recognize the good that is being done and may be done among these, I confess that I feel more concern for churches at the East end than at the West-end of this vast city, or in its innumerable central courts and alleys. There, and not in your great squares and magnificent roads, there are the "much people" whom, as at Corinth in the days of Paul, the Lord has in this city waiting for the Word of God. It used to be a great joy to me to pay a yearly visit to the church of St. George's-in-the-East, during the incumbency of the late rector, who, I dare say, is well known to you by name—the Rev. Harry Jones. I have been there for many years to preach to his people. If sympathy with people such as these can make one feel at home with them, I always felt at home there. Somehow or other, and in spite of many discouraging phenomena, nothing has shaken my faith in the power of the words of Christ to reach the hearts of men when they are truly, simply, consistently, and lovingly presented. These desperate theories of human depravity which are so popular in some schools of theology, if I believed them—which I do not—would, indeed, cast my heart down; but I thank old Tertullian, little as I like his hot African temper at times, for that grand phrase of his, "*Anima naturaliter Christiana*"—"The soul, which is naturally Christian."

Oh! if I had before me a congregation of ministers of God's Word, I would say to them, "Oh! fellow-ministers, there is something in all those hearts that can be reached—some chord that will give forth sweet music if you only have the skill to touch it." In our Church reforms as well as in

our State reforms—and the Church, I think, needs reform as urgently as the State does—we must think more of the people. It was a suicidal folly of that old Sinhedrim that despised alike the popular ignorance which they had caused and the popular aspirations with which they had no sympathy. They sent out some of their officers to apprehend Jesus, and when the men came back without Him the magistrates said, "Why have ye not brought Him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spake like this man." Then answered the Pharisees, "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him? But this people who know not the law are cursed." There is no special gift in rearing prophets. If we, with our academic training and culture, cannot or will not speak to the people in a tongue that they can understand, we must not be surprised, and still less must we be angry, if they choose teachers for themselves. Mr. Spurgeon's views upon many points of technical theology are not mine. We have been brought up in different schools, and trained to look at things perhaps under different circumstances; but who cannot recognize the great gift bestowed on that man to reach, not the ear only, but the heart and conscience of the people? Less than two years ago Mr. Moody was in Manchester, and I, putting for once my dignity into my pocket, and disregarding some suggestions as to propriety which were made to me, went with two or three of my leading clergy, two of my arch-deacons, to hear him—not out of idle curiosity, but to learn something, if God would give me grace to learn. I heard him in our Free Trade Hall, which would hold five thousand people, and where, perhaps, that day there were six or seven thousand.

That man of simple utterance, with nothing to attract in the way of personal appearance, and with a decidedly American twang, had the power of riveting those five thousand people. He spoke to them simply about the love of God, illustrating in his simple fashion by a dozen or twenty apposite anecdotes. When we left I said to my good Archdeacon of Manchester, "Anson, what do you think of this?" He said, "What I have been thinking of it is, Why can't we do the same? Why can't we reach five or six or seven thousand people, and keep them listening for half an hour, and see none of them go to sleep?" I may mention another anecdote which, though not in this direct connection, illustrates what I want to bring before you. For the authenticity of it I believe that I can vouch. At least I have tested it, and I have been reassured that it is true. In a parish at the East of London it was announced that the Bishop of Bedford was going to preach. A tradesman in

the parish, who had been a sort of apostle of the propaganda of atheism, thought that he would go and hear him. People in the church who knew the man were surprised to see him among the congregation, but he was there, and he listened; and when he went away he made this remark: "Now, if that Bishop had argued I would have fought him; but there was no arguing with him. He preached to us simply about the love of God, and that touched me."

May I, before I go on with my direct line of thought, mention another instance, as it comes to my mind at the moment. Some people will say that we shall never get sufficient money if we get our churches filled with people, and lose the well-dressed folk, who give us—well, their sums larger or smaller, as the case may be. But the costliness of the dress is very often in inverse ratio to the amount of the sums given in the offertory. Well, they cannot afford both, you see, and some people prefer the costly dress to the liberal offering. Well, about five or six weeks ago I went to a parish in my diocese in the neighborhood of a large manufacturing town, which I dare say is known to you—the town of Bolton-le-Moors. It was an outlying parish, two miles from the town. A "village" they called it in Lancashire, but there are five thousand people living in it. They are almost all colliers, or engaged in collieries. There may be three or four people in the parish who are fairly well-to-do. The inhabitants had an ambition, which I rather ventured to check than to encourage, to have a new organ; and, though I told them that I thought that £400 would be quite enough for an organ for the like of them, they seemed to think that they should like to spend £700 upon their organ. They had raised £300 or £400 already, and I was asked to make another appeal. The church was full from end to end. I believe that it would hold seven or eight hundred people. As I looked over them—for one does look over one's congregation before he begins to speak—as I looked over them I thought, "Well, perhaps these people will be worth £5 in the way of a collection. I know that they are liberal people in these parts." I did not press the thing very much upon them, for, to tell you the truth, I thought that they were going in for rather too large a cost, and so I pressed the matter upon them with only moderate emphasis. But they seemed determined to have what they wanted, and when the collection came to be reckoned up, it amounted to £128 17s. 7d. But that is not my point. How was that collection made up? Well, there were five ten-pound notes. They represented the well-to-do people. There were fifty-nine sovereigns in the collection, and three half-sovereigns; and the rest was in silver and copper. Fifty-nine

sovereigns from a congregation of eight hundred colliers, earning, perhaps, 30s. or, at the outside, £2 a week! I have no fear of our church resources being exhausted by our fully reaching the hearts of those that are sometimes called, without our fully realizing what weight there is in the words, "the masses." It is not the parade of a gorgeous ceremonial which, however it may please the taste, I believe has very little converting power in it. It is, I repeat, the simple power of God's Word, "The people pressed upon him to hear," what they felt was "the Word of God." Paul felt it. He says, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." He did not mean to disparage sacraments, but he did mean to exalt preaching—not the gifts of the preacher, of which he himself, in the judgment of the Corinthians, did not possess many, for they said of him, "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." It was not the gifts of the preacher, but the power of his message. Writing again to those Corinthians, he says that it was God's good pleasure, "through the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." That is our modern version, but the Greek is "through the foolishness of the thing preached."

Oh! that God would give to all them that essay to preach, that are called to preach, the grace to preach this foolish thing—foolish as men estimate the forces that shake the world; but, nevertheless, the wisdom of God and the strength of God, the little stone cut out without hands which has smitten and destroyed so many of those colossal images which the kings of the earth have set up in their dreams of pride. I say, Oh! that God would give us grace to preach fully, faithfully, wisely, lovingly, this foolish thing, this Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, more in that spirit and with that simplicity and that abounding sympathy with which it was first preached in the cities and on the mountain slopes and by the lake shores of Galilee; and then I believe that the people would be found pressing to hear it as they pressed then. Of course, where the population has been swept away from circumstances, as in the city of London, perhaps it may be impossible to fill our churches with people; but I will undertake to say that every church in London round which there are people living may be filled, if we only go the right way to work to try to do it. There must be this first, the preaching of the Gospel, in its simplicity, lovingly, sympathetically, and then, the great law of proportion being duly observed, all other needful, proper, expedient, desirable things will fall naturally into their places.

Experiments might be ventured among people vitally Christianized that would be perilous—yea, more than perilous, certain to work mischief—if this

great purifying leaven were not first there. Artificial safeguards, we all know, are not worth much. It has been repeated till one has almost grown sick of the phrase, that you cannot make people virtuous by Acts of Parliament; and of course we know that Acts of Parliament operate in a very narrow sphere. The principle must be planted deeply within. The man must learn to be a law unto himself. The conscience must be the supreme governor of conduct, and the arbiter not only of right and wrong but even of expedient and inexpedient. And what is so much talked about now, though some of you, perhaps, may hardly know the meaning of the word—"altruism," or a paramount thought for others—is surely no discovery of the positivist philosophy. They vaunt it as one of their great discoveries—as their gospel; but it had its prophet and its ideal eighteen hundred years before Auguste Comte lifted up his voice and preached it. It is part of our gospel—not the whole of it, for man has his duties toward God as well as toward his fellow men; but it is the second great word of Jesus, like unto the first, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." To show the true bearing of this in relation to the complex phenomena of modern life is our duty as preachers of the gospel. It was the "life" which the angel meant when he bade Peter and John "Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."

We have no need to be apprehensive of results, though these are not in our hands. Words spoken in love and tenderness and sympathy—words like Paul's, in which "we seek not yours but you"—words which will make better husbands and wives, better parents and children, better masters and servants, better politicians and citizens—surely, words such as these, He who is with the Church always, even unto the end of the world, will never let fall wholly idle and profitless to the ground.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY A GIFT FROM GOD.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. W. C. MAGEE.

LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

Preached in St. Peter's Church, Eaton Square, London.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 7.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

THIS Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians is evidently written under the influence of two feelings which scarcely ever seem to be absent from the mind and the heart of St. Paul as he writes or speaks. One of these is faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and the other is fear for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul is ever filled with an undoubting and unwavering faith in the truth and the divine origin of the Gospel that he is preaching to the world. It is, for him, the truth of all truth. He has never so much as a shadow of a doubt that the truth has come to him by divine revelation. It is the gospel and the glorious gospel of God that he has to proclaim. It is not only true but it is the truth: it is the everlasting truth: it is the power of God unto salvation. It is the revelation in this world of the eternal and the invisible that are to outlast all things that men see and touch and handle. Assuredly, a doubt concerning the divinity of the gospel of Christ and of his kingdom has never crossed, so far as we can see, the mind of St. Paul. And yet, with all this absolute assurance of faith that the gospel is God's divine gift to man, St. Paul is haunted with fears for the future of that gospel. There is scarcely a Christian church to which he writes to whom he does not express, in some form or other, these fears. He knows that, after he has gone, grievous wolves will come in, not sparing the flock. He knows that perilous times for the gospel and the kingdom of Christ are near at hand. He knows that there must be heresies and schisms and divisions. He knows that there must spring up those whose word shall eat as a very canker. He is full of fear, and he frankly confesses it. He is distressed; he is perplexed; he is cast

down; he is desponding; he is all but despairing, about the eternal kingdom of God of which he is the messenger and the apostle.

How are we to reconcile so deep a faith and so keen a fear as we find in the heart of the apostle Paul? It may help us to understand it if we remember that in some degree he thus reflects the heart and the mind and the foretellings of our blessed Lord himself. Our Lord, assuredly, knew that he was founding a divine and eternal kingdom, that he was basing his church upon a rock against which the gates of hell should never prevail; and yet how constantly does our Lord forecast the failure and defeat of that church. How does he describe himself as the sower going out to sow, three-fourths of whose sowing comes to nought; or the sower of the field in which the adversary, while men sleep, sows tares that choke and hinder the growth. Or if he describes those whom he is sending out to conquer the world as the light of the world and the salt of the world, does he not foreboole a time that may come when the salt shall have lost its savour, and men shall cast it out and tread it under foot? And even as he founds his eternal kingdom of faith does he not foretell the time when he shall come and scarce find faith upon the earth?

We see, then, brethren, all through the divine prophecies concerning the future of the Church, this mixture of a deep conviction that it is a divine and eternal kingdom, and yet an equally deep conviction and an equally clear forecast of the fact that from time to time in the history of this Church it shall be ever and again upon the verge of perishing.

How are we to understand this, brethren? It concerns us to understand it; for we in our own day have to suffer somewhat from the apparent difficulty of reconciling these two things—faith in the gospel and fear concerning the gospel. When we Christians, now-a-days, who profess our deepest conviction that this gospel is from God, nevertheless manifest fear and anxiety about the future of the gospel, it may be, in our own country and our own church—when we show ourselves distressed and anxious about assaults upon the gospel, how often are we met with the taunt, "Do you really believe that your gospel is from God? Do you really believe that Christianity is a divine revelation and a divine power upon earth? And, if so, why are you so afraid about Christianity? If you really believe it to be divine how can it do otherwise than triumph, say what men may against it?" And so our fear and our anxiety for the faith are made a taunt against us and an argument against the truth of that faith.

Let us see whether we can understand clearly what is the reason for confi-

dence and what is the reason for fear, as we regard the present or the future of Christianity amongst us.

Brethren, we do fear and we ought to fear for the future—for the continuance and for the purity of Christianity amongst us: and why? Not because it is not divine, but because it is,—because we are most deeply assured of this—as assured as we can be of our own existence—that this gospel is God's most blessed gift, his most direct and Divine revelation to man. For that very reason and for none other do we tremble at times for the future of that gospel in our midst. And why so? Because, if that gospel be divine, its birth is not of this earth; its home is not of this world. It is a seed that needs to be sown, and which does not spring up naturally in our earthly soil—a seed that needs culture and care and protection from the sowers of the false seed, and the growing of the choking weed, just because it comes from heaven and does not naturally spring up from earth. It is a gift from God, and therefore it follows the law that regulates all God's gifts, that as we treat them so do they abide with us or vanish away from us. Christianity, brethren, is a supernatural gift and a supernatural thing, but it is not an unnatural thing: and it would be altogether an unnatural and monstrous thing if it were to be the only gift of God that is exempted from that great law that rules all his other gifts—"To him that hath shall be given, and to him that hath not"—that is, that hath and uses not—"shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have." Yes, brethren, this is the law of every one of God's gifts, even of the very meanest and seemingly most natural of all the gifts that we possess. Take it from the very lowest to the highest scale of existence and possession, and see how this law rules all God's gifts. The seed that we sow has in it, surely, a holy germ of life. It is not self-created or self-sustaining: and that life of the seed needs, as I have just reminded you, the care and the culture of man to bring it to perfection. The arts, the sciences, the culture of humanity,—do they not need fostering care and careful watchfulness and diligent patronage, even, if they are to come to success? Nay more, brethren, the very social existence of mankind—all that makes the joy and the security and the peace of the home—the love, the obedience, the morality, the purity, the sweet grace and tenderness of a Christian home—do these spring up naturally in every home? Are parents and children to be seen naturally exhibiting all that makes a home graceful and beautiful and dear? Or do we not know what careful culture, what watchful training, what resolute self-denial, what patience, what care, what tact even, are needed from day to day in our own homes if we would make them all that they ought to be? Is

it not true, then, of all these gifts—the social, the moral, nay, even the intellectual—that we have them as treasures from God, but, nevertheless, we have them in earthen vessels; and that just as a ray of light from the sun comes down into our lower world a divine and a blessed gift, and yet it is dimmed and deflected by the mists through which it may have to pass, so every good and perfect gift comes down from God, a blessed and a divine thing; and yet that human nature into which it comes, and with which it allies itself, and which must be the keeper and custodian of it, has over it a terrible power of reflecting it for evil—of perverting, of wasting, and, thereby, of losing and destroying. And so, not because Christianity is not from God, but because it is—just because the excellency of the power is from God, and yet because that precious gift with all its divine power is lodged in earthen vessels—while we have an unwavering confidence and certainty in the final triumph of Christianity, our hearts may be filled with fear and anxiety for the present fate of Christianity here or there—in this heart, in that home—in this or that church—in this or that country; for, though Christ has promised that the gates of hell shall never prevail against his entire church, he has nowhere promised that they shall not prevail against portions—against large portions of that church. There is, then, a false and there is a reasonable confidence, as we look upon Christianity at any moment in the world,—a false confidence if we suppose that our Christianity—the Christianity in our own hearts, in our own homes, in our own church—will be preserved by an unnatural and an undeserved miracle, if we fail to do our duty respecting it. And there is the true confidence that, fail as it may here and there, through the very fragility of the earthen vessels in which it is treasured, or the stain or the corruptibleness of them, nevertheless, the heavenly gift shall never entirely fail, because the excellency of the power that is in it is of God.

You see, then, brethren, how directly this bears upon the subject that I have to bring before you this day, for that subject is nothing less than this—How shall we Christians of the English church preserve in our English homes—preserve in our country of England—the blessed treasure of Christianity that God has given to us? If we neglect it, if we abuse it, if we waste it, if we fail to guard it, so surely as he has taken it away from other countries that have dealt with it in like manner, so surely may he do so from us; and ill does it become us, brethren, to boast of the Christianity of England, and to talk confidently of the future of our Christian country, unless that confidence be justified by the knowledge that we are each one of us, as in the sight of God, doing all that in us lies to preserve that Christianity in our own

hearts—in our own homes—in our own church. He who walks amidst the seven-branched light can take away the candlestick now, in wrath and in judgment, as he did of old in the beginning of the history of judgment and of blessing that marks his presence in his church.

Let us take heed, then, brethren, that there be naught in our church to provoke him to suffer the light of it to be quenched by laxity, or torn away by violence. While we acknowledge that the excellency of the power of God is in the midst of us, let us take heed to remember that it is there subject to the eternal condition of the gift,—that it is held in earthen vessels, and that the earthliness of our own hearts—the sinfulness and carelessness of our own lives—may cause us, any day, the loss of that treasure.

And now let us consider this question of the continuance and permanence of Christianity in a country, with reference to one gift of the church and one only: I mean the gift of the Christian ministry to the church.

There are none here who would doubt or question the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to his church the gift of a separated and ordained ministry,—that he designed that there should be those who, receiving their stewardship from him, should ever be to his flock the ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God. An ordained and a separated ministry is one of Christ's gifts to his church. To that ministry, brethren, Christ has given gifts for you—gifts of some of which it is not in their power to hinder you by any fault or earthliness of theirs. The sacraments that Christ has given to his church no unworthiness in the hand that distributes can hinder of their effect. The unworthy minister may be what he has been likened to—the torch whose light is for another, and whose waste is for himself—as he holds out to the church the mysteries of Christ's sacraments. The word—the written word of Christ which he has entrusted to the guardianship of his ministers—it is not in their power to take from you or to hurt by their unfaithfulness. But how large a measure of other gifts and other duties, brethren, in which you of the laity are deeply concerned, do depend upon the purity and the earnestness of your ministers. All that the clergyman is bound to be to his people, of the prophet and of the pastor and of the teacher, too, depends on this. All that stern and resolute faithfulness that you should demand at the hand of him who stands in the midst of you, to "cry aloud and spare not," as he utters forth the judgment of God against the sins of his day or of his society,—all that you have a right to demand at his hand of prophetic faithfulness,—all that you have a right to expect from him of pastoral loving care and self-denying watchfulness for the flock that Christ has bought with his

own blood, and for which, if needs be, he should be ready to lay down his life,—all that you have a right to expect from him of learned and wise and skilful and well apportioned distribution of the treasures of God's word, as a well instructed scribe bringing out of his stores things old and new,—all these gifts of the prophet and the pastor and the teacher depend upon the purity and upon the saintliness and upon the earnestness—or, in one word, they all depend upon the spirituality—of your minister.

Brethren, you of the laity are not slow to remind us of the clergy of this fact. You set before us a high standard—and I pray God that you may ever set before us a high and a still higher standard—of our duty to you as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. You love to tell us—do you not?—that your ministers should be holy men—that whatever may be allowed of laxity or carelessness to a layman, you expect better things in a clergyman. And you love sometimes, do you not?—to remind us that we do not always come up to this standard. And perhaps there are some who are not unwilling to detect instances of failure to reach that standard, and to say, "Ah, there is such a one: how utterly he fails to realize all that we know a clergyman ought to be. What an earthen vessel that is that holds those treasures of the sanctuary!" And then, perhaps, the layman will add complacently, "I am not a great pretender to piety. I do not set up to being very much better than my neighbors. I am not a very strait-laced person, but I do expect piety and spirituality in a clergyman." Yes, all this is true, brethren, and we need to be reminded of it. God knows that the minister who is to strive to raise his people to a higher level of holiness and spirituality has need to be so raised first himself; and God knows how hard and how sore the task is to the minister who, sharing the infirmities of his flock—else how could he be to them a faithful and sympathizing priest?—has still to endeavour to set before them in his own life and conversation a higher standard—if it may be so—than their own. All this is true, and we need to be reminded, ay, we need to remind ourselves day after day and hour after hour—of the earthliness of the vessel in which are treasured for others the sacred things of God's holy place. And we need above all others, to be reminded of that danger which lies in the daily handling of holy things,—need, above all others, to pray from our very hearts, in fear and yet in faith, "From hardness of heart and contempt of thy word and commandment, good Lord, deliver us, thy tempted and endangered ministers."

All this is true, brethren—true of the gifts which the clergy possess for you. But have you thought of this on the other hand—that if the clergy possess

gifts for you, for the use of which they must be accountable, the clergy themselves are a gift to you, for the use of which you must be accountable? If the treasures of God's grace—if the sacraments of Christ's church—if the opportunities of the ministry—are God's gift to the ministry, the ministry in its totality, as an order, is God's gift to the laity; and, if so, that gift comes to you conditioned as every other gift of God does—that you shall rightly use it, or if you do not rightly use it, that it shall suffer in your possession, that it may become to you not a blessing but a hurt, for the ministry is a savour of life unto life, or death unto death; and which it shall be to the laity depends not together—nay, depends not so much as is sometimes thought—upon the ministry. Rather does it largely depend upon the laity themselves. For instance, the layman who tells us that he desires spirituality in his minister, and wishes that whatever he himself is, his minister, at least, should be all that a minister ought to be—has he ever once paused in his criticism of his minister to kneel down and honestly raise one prayer to God that He may make that minister, for Christ's sake, all that he ought to be to him? Do those who criticise the ministry, and who are swift to point out its defects or its failures, spend much time in praying for their ministers? Or, if they spent some larger proportion of that time than they spend in fault finding, might it not be that their prayer might return into their own bosom sevenfold, in the blessing of a more deeply spiritual pastor? Or again, those who desire that the ministry should be more spiritual, more elevated, more saintly—do they ever help them in this way? Do they ever consider how sore a temptation to worldliness, and to forgetfulness of their sacred calling, must be the society of merely worldly or fashionable laymen or women, in which the clergyman is bound to move and to mix for the sake of his flock? Do they who claim an almost superhuman sanctity and strictness and spirituality, on the part of their pastor, help him by receiving him in their society as the man of God, and showing by their demeanour to him that they recognize him as such and that they desire him to be such in their midst? Or are they willing to welcome him as the pleasant social companion, the cultivated gentleman, the "good fellow" of the dinner party, and then to be somewhat surprised and offended if he is not all that they think a clergyman ought to be?

My brethren, ask yourselves, do you all deal quite fairly, quite honestly, by your ministers in this matter? Do you strive, each one of you, as regards the clergy of our church, so far as in you lies, to help them to be all that you say and believe that they ought to be? We hear much, in this day,

of ours, of sacerdotalism on the part of the clergy, and we hear sometimes the loud expression of resolve on the part of some, at least, of the laity, that they will not tolerate sacerdotal assumptions on the part of the clergy. If there be on the part of any of us of the clergy an undue magnifying of that part of our office which makes us priests before God—a grasping of anything of the power or of the honor that belongs to our divine Lord and kingly Priest, then it is well that we should be rebuked for such assumption, and well that we should be told that such assumption is not to be endured in the church of Christ. But there is another temptation to sacerdotalism on the part of the clergy, and which perhaps, the laity scarcely sufficiently remember. When the layman says, "I am not very much given to asceticism or piety, but I think that my clergyman should be so," what is he doing, after all, but proposing a vicarious piety on the part of the clergyman? The layman is willing enough that the clergyman shall not be a priest, but he is not willing that he himself shall be what he claims to be and what in a real and a deep sense he truly is—a priest to God himself, to offer to him the daily sacrifice of a pure and prayerful life. Yes, there is a sacerdotalism of the clergy, and a great danger of a sacerdotalism of the clergy; but it is not only the sacerdotalism that the clergy invent, but the sacerdotalism that the laity force on the clergy when they bid them be holy and spiritual in their stead.

See to it, brethren, that, if you claim, and rightly claim, that the clergy shall be no more than clergy ought to be, you resolve, on the other hand, and rightly resolve, that the laity shall be all that the laity ought to be. You are, indeed, "kings and priests unto God." Be kings in the regal control over your own appetites and your own passions: be priests in the daily sacrifice and service of your life to God, and in the help that you may render for God's and for Christ's sake in the daily sacrifice that you may make for the help of some suffering brother or sister; and so help your ministry to be to you what they ought to be.

And, yet again, surely, on the laity devolves the duty of a fitting maintenance of the clergy. The gospel, as we have said, is God's gift; but it comes with this amongst other conditions to you of the laity—that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel,—that they who give to you spiritual things should reap your worldly things. This is as much a law and a condition of God's gift of the gospel as any other law and any other condition that accompanies it; and the neglect of this law—the omission to fulfil this condition—must seriously hurt the gospel in your midst, if it be a condition imposed by God. Men talk, often loosely and often very unjustly and dis-

honestly, of the need of poverty on the part of the clergy, in order to their spirituality; and they seem to speak and think sometimes as if it were an advantage to a country to have a poor clergy, and as if those who claim to be the successors of the apostles should show in our midst not only apostolic piety, but apostolic poverty. Those who so speak forget this fact—that if the apostles were poor, so were their flocks; and that to see a poor and suffering minister in the midst of a wealthy and luxurious laity is certainly not what we may term a realization of apostolic Christianity. How stern would have been the rebuke—how earnest and pathetic would have been the entreaty—of the apostle who claimed that the labourer was worthy of his hire, if, instead of appealing to the poor and the scattered and the scanty converts of the early church, he had been appealing to great multitudes of wealthy and even luxurious Christian laity. Brethren, a poor, a suffering ministry, in the midst of a wealthy and prosperous laity, and that poor and suffering ministry an eminently spiritual and pious one, is a state of things that probably never has existed in the Christian Church, or, if it did exist, never could continue long, for one or two things would have been certain to happen: either that the devoted and saintly and poor ministry would teach the laity the duty of giving, or else that careless and luxurious and illiberal laity would be soon smitten as a judgment with an unlearned and ignorant and worldly clergy; for spirituality does not necessarily go with poverty, and there may be as much of worldliness in the hunger that craves for wealth, as there may be in the sated luxury that spends that wealth. You will not have a spiritual clergy by securing a pauper clergy: you will but obtain a class of men for whom the scanty stipend that was unfitting to offer the Christian and the gentleman is a sufficient temptation to induce them to forsake some lower calling, and trust themselves into the priesthood that they may earn a piece of silver and a morsel of bread.

No brethren, God's conditions attached to all his gifts are unalterable. They are eternally wise, and therefore they are never safely evaded or denied; and if to his gospel is attached this condition—that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, and that they who profit by the gospel shall make fit provision for the preachers of it—this condition can never safely be left unfulfilled.

Is it so now? Is it the truth, brethren, that the ministry of our great wealthy Church of England—when I say "wealthy" I speak of the wealth of its laity—is it true that this ministry is suffering from poverty in any respect? And, if so, whose is the fault? In no spirit of anger—in no spirit of hasty

fault-finding—yet in all honesty and simplicity and godly sincerity, do I desire to put before you the simple facts of the case.

There is in our Church a very large number of clergy—I think some six or seven thousand—who are known as unbeneficed clergy—as curates. I speak nothing now of the insufficient maintenance of many of those who are beneficed clergy. I ask you for a moment to direct your thoughts to the condition of the unbeneficed clergy in our church. How comes it that there are any clergy unbeneficed—that is to say, any clergy who are not possessed of a cure of souls or parish of their own? Why are such persons as stipendiary curates in our church? Simply for this reason—that the population of the country, that is to say, the number of the laity, has so increased that additional laborers are needed if the parish priest is to do his duty to his people; but the income of the parish priest is insufficient to provide the additional laborer in most cases; and if the incomes of all priests were equalized and divided there would be none left for the provision of any assistant minister. These unbeneficed clergy—these assistant clergy—are in a very special sense the servants of the laity. They are the additional servants brought into the establishment of the ministry—if I may speak of it in terms so homely—brought into your establishment especially to minister to your need and want. Are they sufficiently provided for? Is the income of an unbeneficed clergyman such as, in fairness and without shame, we may offer to a Christian and an educated gentleman? In very many cases it is not so. And be this remembered further—that as you introduce increasingly a number of these unbeneficed clergy into the ministry of your Church—as you increase, that is to say, the number of your servants—the number of benefices remains very nearly fixed, or but slightly increases, at any rate; and therefore you are ever increasing the number of the unbeneficed: that is to say, you are diminishing, year by year, the prospects of a benefice for each one of these. And when I speak of the prospects of a benefice, I am not speaking merely of the prospects of sufficient maintenance. I am speaking of independence; I am speaking of an assured position: I am speaking of that cure and government of souls which every priest in Christ's church may naturally look forward to obtain. I am speaking of the not unnatural desire of a man who has laboured for some twenty years in Christ's church, at the beck and call of others, liable to be moved in the chances of life from one place to another, with his family, spending his life in a spirit of wearing and anxious dependence. I say that the number of benefices for these men is comparatively unchanged, while the number of the men is increasing yearly. And therefore it

comes to this—that the long weary years of unbeneficed service in our church must be increasing year by year; and so they are for the period at which a man can expect, on the average, to obtain promotion in our church is yearly lengthening; that is to say that the deferred hope that makes the heart sick is year after year, for many an honest and conscientious and pious laborer in your service, growing more and more weary, more and more deferred, more and more heart-sickening in its delay and its disappointment.

Now, it is to help these—the unbeneficed ministry of our church—that the Society for which I plead sends me here to entreat your help. I ask you, my dear friends, with regard to these unbeneficed ministers in Christ's church, having, as I have just put it to you, an especial claim upon you of the laity, inasmuch as they are specially brought into that ministry that they may minister to you, to consider whether their prospects of promotion and their income at middle life are such as you think they ought to be. And if they be not, I ask you, not for their sakes—for I will not plead for my brethren in any Christian assembly as if they were paupers in need of a dole—I will not so ask on behalf of my brethren, and for my brethren and companions' sake I will not so degrade the plea which I make for them, but I do plead with you for your own sakes, for the sake of the ministry of Christ which you desire to be a blessing and a strength in the midst of you, and for the sake of Christ's church of which you, the laity, are the great body, that you will mind the condition in which [illegible] and the ministry which brings and teaches it have been given, and that you will see that those who are laboring for you are sufficiently provided for. This is what this society for the augmentation of the salaries of the unbeneficed clergy aims at; and this is what I do earnestly entreat that you will help them to realize this day. For these clergy who have [illegible] in your cities or towns upon inadequate salaries, I ask you to do something this day, and to do it, as I have said, not for their sakes, but for your own.

The excellency of the power in this matter of alms-giving, is of God; and I do pray that he may put it into your hearts to deal in timely and wise and large liberality with these your servants, that there may be returned to you a tenfold blessing by him whose ministers and servants they are.

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. STUBBS.

BISHOP OF CHESTER.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Jan'y. 25, 1885.

ACTS ix. 15.

"... Paul, he is a chosen vessel unto Me."

EIGHTEEN hundred and fifty years ago a young man, a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, set out from the city of Jerusalem to go to Damascus. He was already a remarkable man — a lawyer, a philosopher, a student, and a Pharisee. He was an eloquent man, and very zealous. He had signalized himself very specially by the anxiety which he had shown for the extirpation of a certain sect or school that was opposing itself to the interpretation of the Jewish law maintained by him and his associates, or which, one might rather say, he and his associates supposed to be undermining that interpretation. He had taken a leading part in the execution of one, at least, of the champions of that sect. He had been very fierce in his denunciation of followers of it, and was now carrying to Damascus credentials from the High Priest to the authorities there, by which he was empowered to arrest and to take to Jerusalem for trial any unfortunate refugees of the kind whom he might find in the place, who had fled, it was supposed, from Jerusalem when the persecution began. He set out from Jerusalem full of zeal, full of confidence in his own cause. He came to Damascus in good time; but what had happened on the way to change him so? He came to Damascus led by the hand by his companions—blind, cowering, unwilling to eat or drink, a changed creature in far more ways than one—weak instead of strong; humble and gentle instead of violent and oppressive; instead of dictating the law and hurling denunciations against all who would not do as he did, actually praying—we may well believe for guidance—"What wilt Thou give me to do?" and for pardon from Him whom he had persecuted. Beloved, we all know who that man was. He was the greatest man that ever lived,

being man and no more; the work that he did was the greatest work ever done by man, being man and no more; and the event that turned him from what he had been to what he became, was, if not the greatest event that ever happened, a great and most significant link in the chain of great events that have affected the history of the world since God made it. Looked at without special regard to its details, what can it mean? Here is the man who by God's grace carried into all the nations of the Roman world the knowledge of the Gospel. Keeping to-day the historical title of the Conversion of St. Paul, we are commemorating the conversion of him through whose conversion the world is converted. We need not speculate by what other means our Lord might have guided His Church to the conversion of the world; we need not imagine whom else He might have chosen as His chief instrument, or what qualities He required in His greatest agent—how He might have fitted him, or how He might have ruled him. We know He did choose Paul: that by his preaching he awakened the Gentiles: that he fitted him for his work by a great and convincing manifestation of Himself: and that He equipped him with gifts and used him in ways which his own writings illustrate, and which we trace the effects of in every region of spiritual history, in every land, and in the precious experience of every convinced and trusting heart. But it would be far too great a theme for an evening sermon, if I were to attempt to trace in anything like detail the steps and stages by which, through the action of this apostle, the history of the world has been changed, and will, we trust, be changed more yet. We must confine ourselves, then, to a few of the personal points that belong to the conversion. Let us look and see what the apostle was converted from, what the special force and the act of conversion was, what he became after it, and what the special, practical lesson for ourselves can be—for teachers and taught.

In the first place, then, Saul of Tarsus was converted to become an apostle, but he was not converted from being a vicious man, or from being a careless, indifferent man, or from being an irreligious man—an unbeliever, as we should say. He was not converted from a life of vice, for although he might call himself "the chief of sinners" in respect of his former conversation when he was a blasphemer of Christ, a "persecutor and injurious," there is not a word in his writings that even seems to insinuate that he had been at any period of his life anything but a strictly, and severely strictly, virtuous man. He had kept the law as he understood it with the utmost faithfulness; no evil accusation was ever brought against him. He was not converted from indifference as a Sadducee might have been; he was keenly

alive to the necessity of living according to the strictest sect of his religion; he did not need to be awakened to the need of serving God, or the imminence of death, judgment, and eternity: as a Pharisee he had all that before his eyes, and was urged not only to keep himself up to all the righteousness of the law, but to make others do the same—to put down all opposing and competing systems and societies. And he was not converted from unbelief in God or false religion. He was rooted and grounded in the doctrine and discipline by which the Almighty had taught and trained people whom He had chosen, so that they might, when He came to His own, be ready to receive Him and become sons of God, not by blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh. The law which he professed was the means by which men were to be brought to Christ. In each of these ways—in virtue, in zeal, in knowledge of the truth—Saul of Tarsus was the representative of the people of Israel; he combined all that was good in them, and he combined, also, all that was opposed to greater good. With the morality of the law he had no desire of a Saviour, and seemingly no consciousness of a want to be nearer to God. He was content. His earnestness was a zeal without sympathy; his orthodoxy was an intolerant insistence that other men should be made to think as he did. He hated the name of the Saviour who had died for sinners. He hated the idea of the sacrifice that had accomplished the demands of law, and he was jealous for the honour of God, whom he worshipped with the zeal of a hater and not a lover of men. All that was evil in him was marshalled against Jesus: all that was good in him was arrayed against Jesus—his strictness and virtue, his zeal for God, his conviction of the truth.

It was a nature which—we may say it humbly—it was most important for grace to master, for God to conquer, for Jesus to turn around and convert, wresting the powers and the zeal and the convictions right round, and directing them to promote every purpose against which they had been concentrated in opposition and persecution. Well, what was it that achieved this change? As he journeyed, he was stayed in his way, a light from heaven struck him, and he heard the voice of the ascended Lord in glory, and Jesus revealed Himself in sight and words, and Saul was converted. It was unquestionably a strange, miraculous, stupendous supernatural incident. It was evidently an incident that forced conviction on a man unlikely to be convinced, and at a moment when of all others he was least likely to be convinced. It was an incident which no amount of gainsaying can rob of its wonderful, critical and consequential importance. It is absurd to think that

St. Paul invented it to account for a sudden change of mind. It is absurd to think that he mistook a sudden convulsion of Nature for a revelation of the face of Jesus. It is certain that something happened which did wrest round his whole life and nature, powers, convictions, principles, and purposes; and was the man likely to be who sacrificed all that he had been for his new belief? Was he likely to make a foolish mistake who by his preaching, his zeal, his eloquence, his wisdom, and devotion conquered the world for his Master? Supposing him to have been either a deceiver or deceived, is it less of a miracle that he should have converted the world by the truth, or through the truth, by the grace and through the grace of the God of Truth? But whilst we fully recognize the vastly important issues that hang on the reality of the miraculous appearance which converted Saul, we must remember that the conversion itself, which is to us the proof, was likewise the end and object of the manifestation. It is because it converted the man who was to convert the world that the vision of the face of Jesus by St. Paul ranks higher in the scale of great events than the vision of the Son of Man standing on the right hand of the Father which was shown to St. Stephen, and it is this that gives to the Commemoration of his Conversion, among our festivals next in order, we may well agree, to those which celebrate the essential events of our Lord's mediatorial work on earth, crowned by the ascension and the mission of the Comforter. But on this I have said, in proportion, enough.

What did the conversion make of St. Paul? We may answer, it made him what God would have him—a chosen vessel of Jesus to bear His name before the Gentiles, the kings, and the children of Israel; it made him an apostle, a messenger of the truths which once he had arrayed himself to destroy; it made him turn his eloquence, his wisdom, his logic, his philosophy to sustain the cause of the Crucified; it made him a penitent, the glory of whose repentance is the seed of the salvation of those to whom he preached Christ; it made him resolute, patient, sympathetic; it turned all the clay that was in his nature to gold. Yes; and it did more—far more than that; it drove him so close to Jesus that he saw the mind of the Saviour; it not merely wrested round his natural powers, but enlarged and glorified them. His eloquence is not now the mere natural eloquence which had been used against Christ, used for Christ; his logic is not now the mere natural logic which had been used against the truth, used for the truth; his zeal is not merely converted, it is inspired. Eloquence, reasoning, burning devotion are in him regenerated, given a vast impulse, a nobler and higher operation,

a broader, deeper, and more prevailing efficacy. The power with which henceforth they work is the power of the Holy Ghost.

The transformation is moral as well as intellectual; that which was good and great in him before is purified and intensified; that which is evil is turned to good. The grace of Jesus, once seen, turns his zeal for his own belief into love for the souls for whom Christ died and whose faith he saw. His endurance becomes sympathy, his fiery energy patient, persistent devotion. He who would once have had all men compelled to be like himself is now ready to become "all things to all men, that by all means he might save some." But I need not go on enumerating particulars of the change, for the most certain and conspicuous feature in the whole career of the apostle when he has once become an apostle is in his entire absorption in the work for which he was chosen. It is an absorption; he seems to sink not only his powers and gifts, but his very personality in his work; he accounts himself to have become an instrument of Jesus and called him a vessel, a "chosen vessel")—an instrument, a living, devoted, animated, inspired piece of mechanism for his Saviour to work on, and in, and through; and he gives himself up altogether to his function of an apostle of Him whom he had persecuted. It is to him an ever-present vision; the face that was stamped on his eyes at the conversion is always before him. The secret of his absorption in his work is his devotion to his Master. He wins Christ, losing all else—mortifying the flesh, renouncing himself in life and death, offering himself wholly, and without a single thought of sparing himself or holding back. How strange it seems, reading the Epistle of St. Paul, to think of this his personal devotion to the love of Jesus.

It is not one whit less conspicuous in his writings than in the writings of St. Peter and St. John, who had been the Saviour's closest companions during His life on earth, while St. Paul, who had never seen him in the flesh must have looked on Him as an enemy. Yet all the tenderest associations of life; all the youth, companionship, and manly confidence; all the affectionate advice and loving teaching—the perils undergone together and the very eye-witnessing of the suffering and death borne so patiently, as well as of the wonders of the Resurrection and Ascension—all this does not, however vividly, however deeply present to the mind of the two greatest of the twelve, kindle them to higher enthusiasm, or more earnest expression, or more entire reality of conviction than does the converting vision induce in him who though "born out of due time," and "not meet to be called an

apostle," becomes in virtue of his devotion and calling the very chiefest of the apostles, the leader of the band whose faith overcomes the world. The key to the absorption, the key to the self-devotion, of St. Paul was his personal relation to Jesus—a relation begun, rooted, and grounded in the fact of the conversion; no mere revulsion, no mere sudden disgust at the insufficiency of what he had lived for before, but the fire of love enkindling his whole being, and bringing him into a union that for every hour of his remaining life makes him more abundant in realisation and more strong in his work—the union of his heart and mind and spirit with Him who had chosen him.

Well, then, beloved, this is his lesson to us; he who is turned to Jesus as St. Paul was, maintains his spiritual life by his hold on and communion with Christ. That is the secret of all the good and true devotion and the sanctifying influence in every true and good life. "I have set God always before me," says David of the presence of Jehovah as his faithful helper and witness. Jesus is our God, coming very near to us, dwelling in our hearts by faith, the ruler of conscience, the mainspring of holy desires, the pattern, the inspiration, the energy, the crown, and the reward. He died for us and rose again. What more did He or could Almighty love do, for Peter or John, or Paul himself, than he has done for you, for you each one, as completely as if there were none other on earth to share with you your share in Him? Let this thought be fruitful in you, and pray God through Him that it may increase more and more in its hold on you until, as it was with St. Paul, you become absorbed in your relation to Him, looking at all things through His eyes, working in all things for His ends, in His strength and by His spirit.

Beloved, I cannot stand here as I do to-night by the invitation of that holy man, our father in the faith whose voice was heard last here but three weeks ago, and who is now at rest—I cannot close my sermon without a grateful reference to him, and an expression of thanks to God who in these days of trouble and unrest and contention set before us such an example of calm, steady, resolute, self-denying devotion to his calling. If ever there was a man who was identified with his work as a minister of Jesus on the principle of the apostle, it was the late Bishop of London—a man in whom self-will was extinguished, a man who lost himself in his work: in whom patience, energy, tact, judgment, zeal, indefatigable quiet industry, just and matured sympathy, a deep insight into men's hearts and a great experience, all subserved to the steady doing of the work to which he was called; in

whom, too, in every word of his preaching and every act of his godly conversation, they who knew of him could say of him daily and hourly, "He has been with the Master." May God, who granted us in these days such a pattern of a meek and quiet, energetic, just, and kindly, loving spirit, give us grace to follow, too, the same end, by the same guidance, in the same love, and in the might of the same sustaining arm.

PRAYER.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. LIGHTFOOT.

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Feb. 1, 1885.

St. Luke xviii. 10.

"Two men went up into the temple to pray."

The teaching of the Gospels is, in large portions, a teaching by contrast. This is the case, to a certain extent, in the historical narrative, but it is especially so in the parables of our Lord. Thus we have the contrast of the two brothers in the parable of the Prodigal Son; the contrast of the two sons in the parable of the father's vineyard; the contrast of the rich man and the beggar in the parable of Lazarus and Dives, and the like; the right and the wrong way of acting are figured, are embodied, are personified in two living, acting men. So it is here; the right and the wrong spirit in prayer, the right and the wrong attitude towards God, are set before us in portraits of imaginary men who might very well have been real men. If you had gone up to the temple any day, and watched the worshippers there, you might very likely have seen the counterpart both of the one and of the other. But there is not only a contrast in the parable, there is also a paradox, a surprise; the ordinary estimate of worth is set aside; the judgment of God overrules the judgment of men; the praise is given where men would give the blame, and the blame is given where men would give the praise. The object of the parable is to correct, to cancel, to reverse human judgment.

"Two men went up into the temple to pray." The place is the same, the time is the same, the object is the same; only the characters of the two men are widely different. To which will you give the preference? Could any pious Jew have doubted about his answer to this question? Would you yourself have doubted if you had been a Jew and lived in that age? Let us look more narrowly at these two men as they stand praying within the sacred precincts. Here is the one, a Pharisee. The sect to which he belongs

is eminently religious, eminently patriotic; the law of God is their study day and night; their duty life is regulated on the strictest principles; they are the recognised leaders of their countrymen, their religious teachers and their political guides; they are regarded as the great bulwark against foreign tyranny and national idolatry; they have altogether the confidence of the people. And he is an eminently favourable type of the sect. It is not enough that he avoids gross and flagrant crime; that he is upright in his dealings with his fellow men; that he respects the sanctity of the marriage vows; he goes very far beyond this—he fasts regularly, he pays tithes scrupulously, he prays fervently after a manner, as this incident shows; not a suspicion is breathed against the truth of his statements as he thus describes himself. No doubt they were strictly true; the very point of the parable depends upon their accuracy. What more, then, would you have than this? Now, turn to the other worshipper, the publican. What a contrast we have here! The publicans were hated, despised, loathed by the Jews. There was only too much reason for all this hatred and contempt. The publicans were so abhorred because they farmed the public taxes. The Roman masters let out the collection of the taxes for so much to the publicans, and the publicans made what they could by the collecting. Hence their position was unsatisfactory from first to last. Though Jews themselves, they were the representatives of the Roman masters of Judea. They thus reminded their fellow countrymen at every turn of the galling yoke of a foreign tyranny, of a heathen tyranny, too. This made matters worse. Religion as well as patriotism was grievously compromised by them. This was bad enough: but this was not all. From the manner in which they contracted with the Roman Government they were tempted to extortion and fraud. Their profits depended on petty acts of insolence and over-reaching, and there is every reason to believe that, as a class, they did yield to their temptation. It might be said that their hand was against every man and every man's hand was against them. Remembering these facts, we are able the more truly to honour a Matthew or a Zaccheus, towering far above the moral standard of their class. And the man before us—what shall we say of him? He had yielded to these temptations. Just as in the case of the Pharisee, so in the case of the publican, there is every reason to accept as strictly true his description of himself.

As I have said before, the very force of the parable depends on the truth of this statement. He, doubtless, had been extortionate; he had used his position and his power to oppress and defraud his fellow countrymen. He

was, perhaps, conscious, besides, of others grievous sins — not specially sins of his class, but sins of himself, sins of mankind. There can be little doubt that when he beat upon his breast, when he bewailed his sinfulness, when he entreated God's mercy, he had on his conscience some heavier weight than the ordinary sins and short comings of the ordinary respectable and religious man. What, then, shall we say? Who will waver between these two men? Who can for a moment hesitate to rank the Pharisee higher than the publican? And yet it is our Lord's judgment — it is God's own verdict — that this man, this publican, this sullied, sin-stained, but withal penitent man, went down to his home justified rather than the highly respected, highly religious Pharisee. The answer is this: To know God is the beginning and the end of all wisdom; to know God is to think truly, is to act truly, is to live truly. Now, the Pharisee did not know God; he was altogether at fault in his ideas of God; he was on the wrong line, and however far he might go on that line, he would be no nearer to God. On the other hand, the publican had taken the right direction: he might be still very far from a thorough knowledge of God; but his ideas of God, however imperfect, were right as far as they went. Let us look into this matter a little more closely.

There are two ways of regarding God. We may look upon Him as a taskmaster, or we may look upon Him as a righteous Father. The first way is hopelessly, irretrievably wrong; the second way alone will lead us to Him. We may look upon Him as a taskmaster. What then? He sets before us a definite piece of work to do. If we do it, well and good; we escape blame; we get our pay. It is give and take; certain things are to be done, and certain other things are to be left undone. There the matter ends. This is what is meant by justification by works. It is a mere question of bargaining. We treat with God as a workman would treat with an employer of labour; we look upon him as one of ourselves, a little more powerful, a little more exacting, a little more stern, but still as one of ourselves — a man, magnified indeed, but a man still, with whom we can stipulate and bargain and haggle about the amount of work to be done. That is the error, the fatal error, of the man in the parable who hid his one talent in the earth. "I feared thee, because thou art an austere man"—not, "I loved thee," not "I reverenced thee," not "I worshipped thee," but "I feared thee." It was apprehension, it was dread—nothing else; no affectionate yearning, no childlike outpouring of the heart, no seeking after the Father's embrace. "Thou art an austere man"—a hard man; yes, a taskmaster, and a rigor-

ous taskmaster, too. "Lo, there thou hast that is thine"—not a little more, nor a little less—"thou hast that is thine." "Nay, everything is mine. Heaven and earth are mine; infinite righteousness and infinite truth, and infinite purity and infinite love are mine. Thou canst never give me that is mine." And so it is with the Pharisee in our parable, though the type of character is somewhat different. Fasting is enjoined, therefore he fasts; tithes are commanded, therefore he pays tithes. Not a moment is deducted from the fasting, not a penny is withheld from the tithes. He will be all safe; he does his work and he claims his pay. Of those boundless reaches of mercy, of truth, of love, which lie beyond all definite precepts, all specific duties, he thinks nothing and he knows nothing; of the infinity of God, he is wholly ignorant; of God's absolute righteousness, of God's limitless goodness he has not a thought; therefore, he is satisfied; therefore he despises others. If he had any, even the faintest, conception of these, he could not be so complacent, he could not compare himself advantageously with others. To him who sees this infinity of God, boasting is altogether excluded; he is fain to call himself an unprofitable servant. Ah, yes! it all springs for that one original root of falsehood, that perverse, fatal idea of the relations of man to God — so much pay for so much work—haggling between employer and employed — conflict, in an exaggerated form, between capital and labor once more.

But the true way to regard God is to look upon Him as a righteous Father, to see His righteousness first, and then to see His fatherly love. To see His righteousness, the awe, the beauty, the majesty, the holiness, the glory of His righteousness! Have we caught only a faint, transient glimpse of it? What then? What becomes of our righteousness, our merit, our self-satisfaction, our self-complacency? What miserable, besmirched, filthy tatters do the very best of them seem, if only for a moment the skirts of His glistening raiment have crossed the field of our vision, the glory of Him who is clothed in righteousness. Do we thank God, can we thank God, now that we are not as bad as other men are? Nay, thank Him for His opportunity, thank Him for His mercy, thank Him for His forbearing patience, but thank Him not where thanksgiving is a mere cloak of self-complacency. No; you cannot compare yourself with another now; you see only your own sin, you can measure only your own unworthiness now, or, rather, it appears far beyond measuring to you. Your righteousness and this man's unrighteousness, your good and this man's evil—what difference is there between them in the

presence of God's infinite holiness, that great [illegible] all human pretensions?

> For merit lives from man to man,
> And not, O God, from man to Thee!

Ah, yes, Lord! I can see two things, and two only: Thy righteousness, my sinfulness, Thee and nothing else.

But we must look not only to God's righteousness; we must look to His fatherly goodness also. We have beheld the heinousness of our sin in the mirror of His holiness, we must now behold the grace of our forgiveness in the light of His love, His fatherly love. And have we not full and perfect assurance that His love will never fail us? What else is the meaning of His great, His inestimable gift to man of His only begotten Son, to take His flesh upon Him and to die for us? By the infinity of His gift he would show us that His love is infinite also—nothing less; and we do Him a wrong, a cruel wrong, if we approach Him as a taskmaster, as a tyrant, as "a hard and austere man;" we blaspheme His fatherly goodness. Have we sinned, and shall we go to Him as to a taskmaster? What consolation, what forgiveness, what hope of either here? Nay, rather we will seek Him as the prodigal son sought Him; we will go to Him as to a father; we will address Him as a Father, we will betake ourselves to him with a child's penitent heart, with a child's trusting soul, with a child's yearning embrace, and He will have compassion on us, will hasten to meet us, though we may be yet a great way off, and we shall be locked once more in His everlasting arms.

Do you think, can you think, that the sense of His infinite love will make you reckless, will make you indolent, will make you presuming? Did love, true love, truly felt, ever have this effect? Nay, just in proportion as you appropriate it, as you realize it, it will quicken, it will stimulate, it will purify, it will inspire you; it will transform your whole being into its own perfections from glory to glory. God's love is the beacon star in the sky, arresting, attracting, guiding, luring us forward on the heavenly path; the love of Christ—not our love for Him, but His love for us—the love of Christ, constrains us, binds us hand and foot, and drags us onward with the cords of a man. The publican did see this, at least in part. He saw God's righteousness in all its tremendous majesty, and he abased himself before it; he saw God's fatherly love only dimly as yet, but yearned for it. Therefore, though he was yet a great way off, God ran to meet him; and so, notwithstanding his sin, he went down from the temple that day "justified rather than the other."

One more thought is suggested by the parable. Prayer is the test of character. So it was with this Pharisee and this publican: so it must ever be from the nature of the case. Prayer is the confronting of self with God; prayer is the communing with God: prayer is the laying bare of the soul before God. Thus prayer proves the realities of a man's being. As a man prays, so he is. He who has learned to pray aright, has learned to live aright. The first and the last lesson of our lives, the first and the last desire of our hearts, the first and the last petition on our lips must be with us, as it was with the disciples of old, "Lord, teach us to pray;" and to the old question the old answer will be vouchsafed now, as then, "Our Father which art in heaven." "Our Father." The sense of God's Fatherhood, as manifested in Christ, flooding our hearts, and dominating our lives—this is the beginning and the end of all theology; there is nothing before and nothing after this. Therefore, holy Father, we beseech thee for Thy dear Son's sake, teach us all, this night and ever, to pray; teach us to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent: teach us so to pray that we may be found among the company of those faithful people who worship not a god of their own making, not a taskmaster, not a tyrant, not "a hard and austere man," but worship Thee, "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

FAITH STRUGGLES.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN VAUGHAN, D. D.

Preached in the Temple Church.

MARK IX. 24.

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

FEW passages of the Gospels bear upon them a more positive stamp of authenticity. The dialogue is so natural, so lively, so rapid in its transitions, and so profound in its suggestions, that it will scarcely endure the suspicion of fiction or forgery. It seems rather to declare itself the actual reminiscence of an original hearer, and might of itself lend strong support to the widely spread tradition that St. Peter furnished St. Mark with the materials of his Gospel. The Revised Version has introduced one important change into the narrative by omitting the word "*straightway*" in the text of the twenty-third verse. The father of the afflicted boy has said in the twenty-second verse, "*If thou canst do anything, have compassion upon us, and help us.*" Jesus answers, by repeating the words, "*If thou canst*," in a tone of inquiry, or of expostulation. "*If thou canst*," sayest thou, as doubting My power in the very act of invoking it? All things are possible to him that believeth: to Me, because I believe, to thee, if thou wilt believe." It is in answer to this reproof, at once so humbling and so reassuring, that the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, "*Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*"

There are no more affecting words in all Scripture. What a reality they must have been for him who spake them! Very perplexing, very bewildering for His own generation, must have been the epiphany of Jesus Christ in Galilee. A man at the first sight like other men, not illustrious in birth, not exalted in station, neither priest, nor scribe, nor rabbi, not recognised by the religious authorities of the nation: on the contrary, watched and suspected and cavilled at, His doctrine regarded as unorthodox, paradoxical, dangerous, revolutionary: how difficult must it have been for common, quiet, modest mem-

bers of congregations, desiring to stand well with their superiors, and to hold the traditions of their fathers, to shake themselves clear of prejudice, and cast in their lot for two worlds with a despised and discountenanced Galilean!

On the other hand, when they heard His gracious words, and saw His wonderful works; when they heard from one and another among their kinsfolk and acquaintance, of cures done and blessings bestowed, of fever, and palsies, and possessions, healed by His touch or without it, of homes comforted, and hearts tranquillised, and lives transformed by a more than magical influence going forth from Him; above all, when they themselves felt in his presence, as they never felt in any other, a charm and a spell of piety and holiness not to be explained, and not to be resisted—how could they choose but believe in Him?

And when, as in the case before us, and a thousand cases like it, some heavy sorrow, some terrible anguish, the wreck and the ruin of some life dearer than their own, for which all the appliances and all the physicians could do nothing, and less than nothing, laid upon them a burden grievous to be borne, and should draw them half unconsciously towards that One Presence which had the secret of sympathy, had the secret of help, had the secret of blessing, could they come, could they stay, could they invite and invoke his aid in their distress and their misery, and not say, and say with a full and definite meaning: "*Lord, I believe?*"

It was just so with the suppliant of this text. There was in him just this combination—let me say, more correctly, this co-existence—of faith and incredulity. It was not so much a suspended or a divided feeling, as of one who was postponing the great decision, or in whom some third thing, neither belief nor disbelief, was shaping itself; as we hear now of persons who can accept this and that in Jesus Christ, but who also refuse this and that in Him, so that they come to have a religion of their own, of which He is one ingredient, but not the only or principal one.

This man's state was not one of mixture or compromise; it was the conflict of two definite antagonisms, faith and unbelief, competing and struggling and wrestling within him. "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!*" This man was not a half believer, he was a believer and an unbeliever, a widely different thing, in one body and in one mind. It was a conflict; it was not a compromise.

Not long ago we read of the death of an honoured, and, by a large following, an almost deified Indian, the representative and, to a large extent, the moulder, if not the founder, of a religion which to many looked like a

modification of, and to some almost an improvement upon the Christianity of Europe and England. In forming a new religion, men can choose and refuse, can take what they like and leave what they dislike of any pre-existing system; and so this religion might adopt much of the morality and a little here and there of the theology of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour. It needed not to encumber itself with a trinity of Divine persons, nor with the divinity or certainly the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. In such a system there was no room for the distressing duality: "I believe and I disbelieve." All was made easy by the removal out of the religion of all that laid too heavy a stress upon the capacity of believing. When reason, or rather when understanding, frames the articles, there is no fear lest any thing should form one of them which could evoke the agonized confession: "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.*" But the father of this story was obliged to say so. He saw before him a Person who was evidently man, and yet to whom he was applying for the exercise of Deity. That was the statement of his case, and we remark upon it this, first of all, that his condition was not one of compromise, as of him who should say: "I will believe this to be a holy man, and a wise man, and a benevolent man; I need not believe Him to be more. I need not regard Him as in any but a very vague and general sense Divine." It was a condition of conflict. There was *this* on the side of faith, and there was *this* and *this* on the side of unbelief, and in this agitation and tumult and warfare of feeling he comes to him, saying, "Lord, there is in me an utter confusion and discord as to what Thou art and what not. I am believer and unbeliever, not one who has taken this or left that, and now is the third thing which is neither; I am in a state of conflict, and as such I come."

Brethren, if we can succeed in making this condition clear, there is a great lesson to read in it. Many men in this age, like the well-known Indian teacher just alluded to, are framing for themselves, without for a moment intending to be anything but Christians at last, a Christianity with the supernatural left out of it—miracle, prophecy, incarnation, resurrection, the God-man Himself eliminated; and it is much to be feared that this kind of compromise is likely to be the Christianity of the educated Englishmen in so much of the twentieth century as the world may be spared to live through. It will be a Christianity very rational, very intelligent, certainly very intelligent. But it will have parted with much that has made our Christianity a discipline to us; it will have got rid of that combination of opposite but not contrary, and certainly not contradictory elements which has been the trial,

yet also the triumph of the Divine revelation, which has transformed by training and schooling, mind, heart, and soul. It will have done with that characteristic feature of the old Gospel which made men suffer in trying to live it, which made a man kneel before Jesus Christ as a Saviour to be wondered at, as well as adored, with the prayer on his lips: "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!*"

There is a *second* thing to be noticed in the condition of this suppliant. He was one who knew and felt that, in all matters, whether of opinion or of practice, the sound mind acts upon the principle of preponderance. He *believed* and he *disbelieved*. He did not conceal from himself the difficulties of believing, the many things that might be urged against it, the thousand probabilities of unbelief, the innumerable chances against the truth of any new proposition until it has stood the test of discussion, the test of experience, and the test of time. He was not one of those rash and fanatical people, who having jumped or rushed to a certain conclusion, are incapable of estimating or even recognizing an argument against it—who bring to their deliberation upon matters of everlasting importance minds thoroughly made up, and count all men first fools, and then knaves who differ from them. No; the father of this demoniac boy saw two sides on this anxious question, and could not pretend to call its decision indisputable, whichever way it might go. He himself believed and disbelieved; but he was aware that, as nothing in the realm of thought or of action is literally self-evident, nothing so certain, that to take into account its alternative would be idiocy or madness, a man who must have an opinion one way or the other, a man who must act one way or the other, is bound, as a reasonable being, to think and to act on the preponderance, if the scale do turn but in the estimation of a hair, of one alternative over the other.

This man was obliged to form an opinion in order that he might accordingly shape his conduct on the mighty question: What was he to think of Christ? Was the Christ of the national hope and of the ancestral promise here before him in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? He was bound to form an opinion as an accountable being, whom God will bring into judgment. But he had a more personal, or at least a more urgent, motive still in the agony of a tortured and possessed home. He could lose no chance presented to him of obtaining help and deliverance. If Jesus of Nazareth was what he heard of Him, there was help, there was healing in Him. The father's heart beat warmly in that bosom, and it would have been unnatural, it would have been unfeeling—nay, it would have been impossible—to leave

such a chance untried. The only tenable or ponderable course for him was to see which way the balance inclined, on inquiry and direction as to the claim of the Person. He might, of course, have resolved that the question could remain undecided; that many further evidences must be waited for; that meanwhile judicious and sensible minds should suspend their judgment. But the father's love, happily for him, forbade this procrastination. Action is required, and before action comes opinion. Therefore he only asks himself one question, "Which way for me, which way at this moment does the balance of probability incline?" There is on the one side the known virtue, the proved wisdom, the experienced benevolence, the attested power—so much on the side of faith. There is on the other side the possibility of deception, the absence of a parallel, the antecedent improbability of an incarnation, the intellectual incongruity of the combination of Divinity and humanity. *This* for incredulity; *this* for unbelief. Strike the balance. Negatives against a positive. Intellectual scruples against a moral duty. "I believe and I disbelieve." Granted; yet the former is a little, just a little, the weightier.

> "Be it but so much
> As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
> Or the division of the twentieth part
> Of one poor scruple."

This decides me which must prevail. "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!*"

Brethren, we press this consideration—it is at least as old as the great *Analogy*—upon the consciences of hearers who may be still in suspense. You know that if the question were of a worldly nature—a journey, or an investment, a verdict upon evidence, or the choice of a profession—you would, as a sane man, act this way or that way, if action were required of you, upon the preponderance of considerations tending this way, and not upon the absence of all considerations pointing the other way. So in matters of opinion. Though there may be, and there are, many subjects upon which it is not indispensable that we should have an opinion at all, yet few men refrain on that account from forming an opinion; and if they form one, they do so on the balance of reasons known to them. But, in many cases, opinion and action are cause and consequence. Action being required of you, you must have an opinion to guide it. Whatever the occasion, whatever the necessity, this is the rule, this is the practice of all rational conduct. It shapes itself on the balance of alternative considerations. It is not need-

ful, surely, to say to any man, that, on the question of the truth or falsehood of Christianity, it is perilous, it is ruinous, for any man to live and to die in suspense. Christianity is not an opinion, not a doctrine, not even a religion—it is a very different thing. If it is anything, *it is a life*. To be or not to be convinced of its truth is to live one way or to live another, and if anything depends upon the way of living—and I do not suppose there is one person present who will dare to say that *nothing* depends—it is vital that this one question should be settled. If on the whole you think it more probable than not that Christ is what the Gospel makes Him, you are as much bound to believe in Him, with all the consequences of doing so, as if the evidence were written before you with the sunbeam, or as if an audible voice from heaven summoned you to follow Him. "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!*" is the prayer upon preponderance for many a man who has not yet fully cast out of him the demon of unbelief.

And there is yet one more thought in the text which must be just recognized before we conclude. This father tested truth by praying. He was not satisfied to say, "I believe and I disbelieve." It was not enough for him even to carry this divided state to Christ, and say, "Lord, I believe and I disbelieve." No; he turned the conflict into direct prayer, "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!*" Many persons imagine that until they have full and undoubting faith, they have no right, and no power to pray. Yet, here again the principle dwelt upon has a just application. If faith preponderates in you but by the weight of one grain over unbelief, that small, or smallest preponderance binds you, not only to an opinion of believing, and not only to a life of obeying, but also, and quite definitely, to a habit of praying, because it is a first principle of the Gospel that sin and death not only involve, but themselves are, and consist in, *separation from God*; and it is only by coming to God, which is prayer, that you can either think or do any good thing. The moment, therefore, that you are of opinion that the preponderance of probability is in favour of Christ, you are bound to begin to pray. Here is your prayer ready for you: "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!*" Faith brings unbelief with it to the throne of grace, and prays for help against it to Him whom, on the balance and on the preponderance, it thinks to be Divine.

"*Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!*" It is just the prayer for the man who is formulating his faith, and has not yet arranged or modelled it to his satisfaction. It is the prayer for the man who is shaping his life, and has not yet exactly adjusted the principles which shall guide it. It is the prayer

for the man in great trouble, who cannot see the chastening for the afflicting, who feels the blow so severely that he cannot yet discern the Father's hand dealing it. It is the prayer of one who stands face to face with a tremendous difficulty, and has not yet got the courage to quit himself like a man in grappling with it. It is the prayer for a man terribly unsettled—a man who is in the dark upon a troubled sea of doubting, and whose only chance is that of the old parable-history: "Cast four anchors out of the stern, and just wish for the day." And it is the prayer for the man entering the valley of the death shadow, and shrinken to the very bottom-most of his hope by the mystery of the invisible world, faintly, and very faintly, lighted up for him by the only *Presence* that can make it tolerable. Blessed is he who, amidst any or all of these trying circumstances, shall have grace to bethink himself of the text of the morning; and when he has first said to Jesus Christ, "*If Thou canst do anything, have compassion and help us*," and his heart His reproof, which is comfort also, "*If Thou canst!*" Why, "all things are possible to him that believeth!" shall be emboldened to make the infidel within kneel down at the throne of grace, and say, with strong crying and tears, "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.*"

RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS.

BY THE REV. H. R. HAWEIS, M. A.

Preached in Sage Chapel, Cornell University, U. S. A.

When I was invited by your late excellent President, Dr. White, to address you, some months ago, I said I would speak to you upon the unity and solidarity of the religious consciousness in man. Need I take a text? Well, a text won't make a sermon without the spirit of the Bible, and if you have that you can get on without chapter and verse. The religious consciousness breathes with the Bible spirit. The soul's life permeates the Bible from beginning to end. Religion saturates human history because it is involved in the constitution of human nature. This is to me the most restful and faith compelling of all thoughts. I look for rest in my religion. Some of us make our religion a mere battlefield: opposing sects bite and devour one another. But I hear the voice of Jesus across the ages; He says: "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." I fall back again and again upon the spiritual elements which do not change: God, the inevitable recurrency, communion with Him, the divine soul hunger. Here I find a unity and solidarity of religious consciousness.

Let us illustrate terms. *Unity* implies a similarity of ideas. For instance, you find among savage tribes in remote ages the custom of appointing delegates or representatives, and you find in Washington or at London of to-day M. C.'s or M. P.'s sitting as representatives of the people. There is the unity of representative government.

Solidarity implies a certain continuity and identity of purpose and effect. So when I dig up in England a coin of Edward III., who reigned 500 years ago, and the coin has the king's head on it, and I find that it is still legal tender in Victoria's reign, I say there is the solidarity of the currency. So throughout the religions of the world I find similarity of ideas, identity of purpose, unity and solidarity of the religious consciousness. God has never

left himself without a witness. Religion did not begin 1,000 years ago. It has always been. God, the Oversoul, is superincumbent upon man's soul, as the atmosphere presses at all points upon the surface of the earth. The Divine fact and the human response, these two twin stars, ever revolve round each other; they constitute the unity and solidarity of the religious consciousness. You may come down anywhere within 1,500 years in the history of man, and you will find those ideas cropping up. You may go to India, Egypt, or China, or Greece, or Rome, and you will find them; aye, and you may come on individuals thrown together by chance anywhere to-day, and you will strike the same fundamental notes, the sweetest and purest in the low, sad music of humanity—God and our communion with Him.

The other day a friend of mine was travelling in the desert on his way to the Pyramids. He looked down upon the poor Arab donkey-driver beside him, and the feeling came over him: "This pettifogging, toiling man, a human being like myself, yet so different from me! I feel kindly toward him, and there is something in his heart that draws me to him, something in his lowly condition and serenity that moves me." So my friend touches him on the shoulder. He could not speak much English, and my friend did not understand much Arabic, but he wanted to communicate with him. And the heart has a language of its own, and the lips become sometimes but stammering utterers. As Longfellow says, there are thoughts which

> Words are powerless to express,
> And I leave them still unsaid, in part,
> Or say them in too great excess.

So my friend touched the Arab, and said: "You believe—you believe Allah?" The man looked around, astonished: he understood, and said: "Yes; me believe Allah." "*I* believe Allah," said my friend. Presently he touched him again, and pointed to the clear skies above them, and said: "You pray Allah?" The man said, nodding his head delightedly: "Yes; pray Allah." Said my friend: "*I*, too, pray to Allah." They could not get on very fast because they did not understand one another's language. But he touched him the third time on the shoulder, and said: "You love Allah—love Allah?" and the man, now with much gesticulation, assented, "Yes, yes!" for he was in sympathy with my friend, and caught his meaning; "Yes; me love Allah." Then my friend stretched his hand out and grasped the swarthy Arab's in his grip, and said: "You, I, brothers; you, I, believe

—pray—love Allah!" The man nodded, and his face grew radiant, and both drove on in silence.

Now, at the end of that journey, that poor Arab, without a word, took all the backsheesh money that had been given him, and pushed it back into my friend's hands. He would take no backsheesh from a man who loved Allah. That is a modern illustration of the unity and solidarity of the religious consciousness. God writes His name not once on stone tablets, but in all ages and climes upon the fleshly tablets of all human hearts.

Nor was this teaching ever more needed than at the present day. Why? Because modern science has attacked the object of religious consciousness, has affected to eliminate God from His own universe, to say that we do not require mind governing matter, that we can explain the phenomena of creation, without any appeal to the Oversoul or self-conscious, governing Mind. That *has* been the tendency of modern science. It is no longer quite so much its tendency. The word agnosticism is gradually becoming fashionable, in lieu of the word atheism, or negation. Science now hardly says out loud, with the fool, "There is no God, there is no object of religious consciousness;" but science now says: "We don't know." Amid the rush and splendor of new scientific discoveries we lived about ten or fifteen years ago in the reign of raw atheism before the flaw in the "no God" argument began to be seen. That flaw was revealed to me when I heard that high and reverently-minded man, Professor Tyndall, say that "we must fundamentally change our conception of matter before we could get out of it the promise and potency of all life."

Well, if you can make up the universe without God, do so, by all means. Let us try. Says Philosopher No. 1: "Give me matter, and I will produce the world as we know it, without God." Says Philosopher No. 2: "I don't want matter. I know of nothing but force." "But," objects Philosopher No. 3, "force must act on something; it must have a *nidus*—be locally lodged. I must have both matter and force before I can begin to operate." "But," remarks Philosopher No. 4, "I must have a particular kind of matter, made up of atoms grouped into a peculiar sort of molecules, one inorganic, like a steel filing, and another organic, like a jelly speck, with the odd property of turning itself inside out." Well, we give him all that. "I think I can do it now," says he; "but—but—I must have sixty-three different kinds of atoms before I can get along." "You seem to want a good deal," I reply. "You have got matter and force—two kinds of matter—

made of sixty-three different sorts of atoms, and then you say you can get on. Get on, then." Our philosopher pauses, and, in the words of Mr. George Lewes, "I believe," he says, "I want matter and force specially determined under peculiar and complex relations." I begin to lose faith in the philosophers. I feel they are taking unfair advantages. I have been standing ready to be converted; but now I can't help cutting in with a remonstrance: "You want matter and force specially determined, under peculiar and complex relations; or, as Professor Tyndall says: 'You want to change fundamentally your conceptions of matter, and then you can get the promise and potency of all life.' No doubt; but how do you get these specially determined, peculiar, and complex relations? Where does it all come from? What so specially determines matter and force, I should like to know?" Says the philosopher, with calm magniloquence, "Causality." Of course, causality; but the fact is, you have put into matter and force all that you want to get out of it. It is the old hat trick; you put into the hat what you afterwards extract. The scientific hat is called Evolution. You have popped sixty-three atoms behind the curtain, and the whole thing has been so honestly done that you have not cared to conceal one of your peculiar and complex moves. The process of filling a scientific hat may be called causality, or anything else, and causality explains everything, no doubt. But in the universe causality is nothing but mind immanent in matter. The Unknowable is a bad word for God, Force for Omnipotence, and Adaptation for Wisdom; and

> Behind the dim Unknown
> Standeth God, within the shadow,
> Keeping watch above His own.—Lowell.

Science, then, cannot after all, discredit the object of our religious consciousness. God or mind governing matter cannot be got rid of. The universe cannot be made up without Him; and because mind is homogeneous, essentially of the same kind, if there be mind in God and mind in man, the rationality of intercourse is evident. The witness to the reality of that intercourse is to be found in the unity and solidarity of the religious consciousness.

The religions of the world are much more alike than they at first seem. Let us take a few parallelisms, to show by one sentence after another, removed a thousand or five hundred years from each other, how we arrive at the same result. What do I find in India, two thousand years before Christ?

I find the devotee on the shores of the Ganges, at the rising of the sun, praying: "We meditate upon Thee, the desirable light." I read elsewhere, "God is light, in Him is no darkness at all." Another ancient prayer, fifteen hundred or more years before Christ, reads;

> Who is the God to whom we should offer sacrifices?
> He who brightens the sky;
> He who makes firm the earth:
> He who measures the air:
> He is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice.
> Who is the God to whom we should offer sacrifice?
> He who looks over the water clouds;
> He who is *the only life of the bright earth;*
> He who kindles the altar flame;
> He is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice.

Hundreds of years later, listen to other seers in other lands: "Offer sacrifices unto the Lord your God," and "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Here is an ancient creed one thousand years before Christ. Kreeshna is the Divine friend of man. He is the Hindu Emmanuel. He is God with us, the one who had an understanding of man's affairs, and who gave him counsel, and was near him in the hour of trouble and in the moment of death. And Kreeshna, the Divine friend speaks: "I am the worship, I am the sacrifice, I am the fire, I am the victim, I am the father and mother of the world; I am the living way, the comforter and witness, the friend and asylum of men." Will you go over these sentences once more? I am the worship. "How amiable are Thy courts, O Lord of Hosts!" I am the sacrifice. "Yea, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." I am the fire, "Our God is a consuming fire." I am the victim, "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin." Do you not recognize those words? I am the father and mother of the world, "Surely Thou art our Father." "When father and mother forsake thee, the Lord taketh thee up." I am the living way, the comforter; yea, "The truth, the life, and the way." Do you remember who said: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you, even the Holy Ghost?" "I am the friend and asylum of men." Is there any friend like God? Is there any friend to whom we can go at all times, and be so perfectly understood? Is

He not the friend that sticketh closer than a brother? Is he not my rest and asylum, my guide, protector, and shepherd? "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters." Is there no unity and solidarity here, between Hebrew and Hindu?

Take the Egyptian religion. Then the Chinese or Greek. Monotheism lies at the root of each. In the Hindu the attributes of these religions are monotheistic. All believe in one God. There Brahm, the one source, was symbolized by Fire God or Water God, but Agni could not burn without Brahm, nor Indra pour without Brahm. In Egypt the myth is arrested half way between the symbolism of India and the anthropomorphism of Greece. The animal-headed god is more than a symbol and less than a man. If you doubt the essentially monotheistic essence of Egyptian religion, turn to its ancient credo, thousands of years before Christ: "Hail, Thou great God, who concealest this hour, Father of all fathers, God of all gods, watcher traversing eternity, the roaring of thy voice is in the clouds, Thy breath is on the mountain-tops. Heaven and earth obey thy commands. God of terrors, bringer of great joy, Thou fillest the granaries, Thou carest for the poor; Thou art not graven in marble, Thou art not seen by mortal eye—Thine abode is not known—no temple can hold Thee; Thy name is not spoken in heaven, vain are all thine images on earth—hail to thee, mighty God!" I read elsewhere, "The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands—heaven is My throne and earth is My footstool—what house will ye build Me, saith the Lord, and where is the place of My rest?"

Passing to China, we find Shang Ti is not quite a personal God—the Chinaman is cautious about the invisible world. Shang Ti is a personal heaven—a something in the unseen, above and beyond, that has affinity with man. He places "the moral law in the heart of man, and," adds the practical philosopher, "sets a governor (the Emperor) over him to see that he keeps it."

Passing to Greece, polytheism there seems to reign triumphant, but on nearer inspection it is reduced to something like monotheistic order in Zeus, king of the gods: and a higher unity still is reached in Moira (Fate) and Anangke (Necessity) to which even Zeus must bow. Eternal, divine, irreversible law is seen to lie at the foundation of all things, having its home in the very bosom of God Himself. Thus in India, all is Brahm; in Egypt all flows from Ra, the Sun; in China all bows to the Personal Heaven; in

Greece and Rome all is subordinate to Zeus or Jupiter, both summed up in the unity of supreme law—law, Anangke, controlling man and bringing him into sympathy with God—in the unity and solidarity of the religious consciousness.

It remains for me to say to you a word on the Bible. The key of the Bible lies in a perception of the progressive nature of the religious consciousness. Once grasp that position, and no so-called attacks on the Bible will do you or it any harm. The Bible has been wounded in the house of its friends: a kind of verbal inspiration value claimed for it which it nowhere claims for itself. It is the history of an inspired people rather than an inspired book. The word of God is in the Bible, but all that is in the Bible is not the word of God. It represents the highest levels of religious thought reached in the different ages by the seers of a people gifted spiritually—the most spiritually-gifted people in the world.

But the spiritual and moral development of the Jews was gradual, and the steps are recorded. You can give the ridiculer of the Bible all his points, and beat him. Says he: "I find poor morality in Moses," and you say: "So do I. We have got on a little since then." "I find scientific error in Leviticus, and questionable history in Exodus." "No doubt," you reply, "for men spoke as they thought, and their knowledge of history and natural law was the knowledge of their age, not ours. Their view of the Supreme Being was at first childish; the prophets mended upon Moses, and Christ superseded, or, as He says, "fulfilled" both. The theological conceptions which clothed the religious consciousness were progressive. You do not speak of the Almighty now as He is spoken of in Genesis. You don't suppose that He walked in gardens in the cool of the day as if He could not bear the heat of the sun; or that He comes down attracted by the smell of roast meat, as He is said to have done when Noah sacrificed. You do not even paint Him, as Giotto did, with perfect reverence, in the middle Ages—an old man, with a long white beard, and the Son a younger man on His right hand, with a dove flying from beneath their feet. Each age has its symbols and the religious consciousness embodies itself progressively. The God of Adam and Noah is hardly the God even of Joshua and Caleb. In David we have a transition of God—one moment he is a mere god of battles, an aider and abettor of pagan spite and violence, and another a God of mercy and loving kindness, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. In Ish he is at once sublime and tender—the High and Holy One inhabiting Eter-

nity, and the tender Friend and Protector of man. "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence followed them." But in Jesus at last, in the fullness of time, the religious consciousness finds its perfect rest and realisation: the moral and spiritual, the intelligible side of God stands at last revealed under the limitations of humanity. All the scattered lights of the ages—Brahm, Kreeshna, Ra, Zeus, the Personal Heaven—meet in Him, who is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. No note of ancient religion that vibrates still but finds an echo in the heart of Jesus—the Revelator of the Father; the Educator of the soul; the Saviour from sin; the High Priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities; the Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, who knows what is in man, and, therefore, the righteous Judge of all the earth.

"*ECCE HOMO.*"

BY THE REV. R. BALGARNIE, D. D.
GRAVESEND.

Preached in the Guildhall, Cambridge.

JOHN XIX. 5.

"Behold the Man."

THE learned and accomplished author of "Ecce Homo"—a distinguished Professor, as I understand, of your own University—in addressing himself to the work of investigating the subject of our Lord's deity and humanity, has carefully guarded himself against all foregone conclusions. Rightly regarding the Saviour's claim to be trusted, loved, and worshipped as the great problem of the age, he gives himself up to the life-study with circumspection tempered with freedom. "Hence!" he has said, "all prejudice and superstition whilst I am engaged in this inquiry. Let me forget for the moment that myriads of my fellow men have already satisfied themselves upon this point, and condemn as anti-Christian heretics and infidels all who have arrived at the opposite opinion. Hence! all theories of men and systems of human doctrine. I will try and forget, as far as possible, all that others have said, or written, or painted upon the subject; will let the facts, as they are recounted, make their own impression upon my brain and heart; and will thus try for myself, before God, to arrive at a just and impartial judgment. And hence, above all, all prescribed methods and conditions of inquiry. This is no matter for conventionalism. I will go directly to the fountain-head of truth, and with my own eyes see, and with my own ears hear, and with my own heart judge, this truth as it is in Jesus. If it be Divine I will fall down and worship it, and Christ shall be my All in all. If it abide not the test of my personal scrutiny, then I will reject it as a delusion of men or a snare of the devil." And in this brave, and honest, and fearless spirit he takes up what he has already proved to be the genuine and authentic record of the works, ways, and words of the Saviour, that he may

scrutinize and judge of them for himself. Momentous is the issue! Is this to be another Thomas who thus unceremoniously joins the group of disciples who follow Christ from Galilee? who silently watches every movement that is made? who jealously listens to every word that is spoken? who takes no part, as yet, either with Christ or his enemies? who is simply a critic and a listener? Or is it another Peter who will deny? or another Judas who will betray? or another John who will lean upon His breast and become a beloved disciple? We cannot yet tell; but our hopes go with him, and our prayer ascends for him, as we plead, that, by the teaching of that Spirit, who alone can "take of the things of Christ and show them unto us," "who hides, also, these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto children"—that by the teaching of that Spirit he may find the truth of this mighty problem, and the truth may make him free.

Now, in just such a brave, fearless, honest, and resolute spirit must each of us approach this subject to-day—not to hear what this one has written, and that one has said, but by grace to discover for ourselves "the truth as it is in Jesus." No one can write our "Ecce Homo" for us; no one can behold the man in our stead. With our own eyes we must look upon, with our own ears we must listen to, and with our own hearts we must accept of this Saviour and King. We must learn to say with Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth . . . and mine eyes shall behold Him, and not another." And with David: "Although my house be not so with God, yet with me hath He made a covenant." And with the men of Samaria at Jacob's Well, who said to the woman: "Now we believe; but not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." But to see him rightly we must get to the right standpoint. In the Doré Gallery there is a seat placed in the centre of the room from which you can see "Christ leaving the Prætorium" from the standpoint of the artist. It may aid us in this inquiry if we look at "the Man, Christ Jesus," from,

I. *Pilate's standpoint.* "He saith unto the people, Behold the Man!" Pontius Pilate was a Roman—the pervaded citizen of a nation that had few principles in common with Judaism. Apart from the interests of the Empire he cared little about the worship or the creed of the Hebrews. It was nothing to him—the military governor of the garrison in the capital and ruler of the conquered province of Judæa—whether the teaching of Jesus was true or false. It was no part of his duty to determine the theological discussions or interfere with the worship or superstition of

the people he was ruling. Provided their religion did not lead to sedition, or insurrection, or war, he was content, for his part, to let it contemptuously alone. "What is truth?" he asks, haughtily and disdainfully, at his prisoner. "What is it worth? What has it done? What is it ever likely to accomplish in this practical and strong-handed world? Is it worth any one's while risking anything—time, health, money, influence—battling for the truth? Mere rightness in thinking, feeling and acting—what, after all, does it signify in the great world-struggle for place, and power, and wealth, and fame? It is power, and not truth, we need in this age of arms and conquest. Let us have something practical, tangible, reckonable by number or by weight, and not vain and idle discussions about abstract questions of right and wrong, truth and error, virtue and viciousness, even of religion and impiety."

Pilate is a type of a vast multitude in our own day, who look down upon all religious and Scriptural questions from a height that may be called sublime. Like the compilers of a dictionary or encyclopædia, they cannot avoid becoming acquainted with the titles of religious subjects, with the names of religious parties, with the character of religious men. These topics crop up in the columns of their newspaper, in their business transactions, in their political associations and after-dinner conversation. They cannot ignore their existence. Yet these men, if pressed for their opinion about religion, would deliver themselves very much after Pilate's fashion:

"Religion, since you ask me for my opinion, is not one of the things that belong exactly to my line of business. I cannot say that I have given much thought or attention to the subject. My wife and daughters go to church, the parson calls and dines with us occasionally, and we subscribe to the organ fund, and all that sort of thing, you know; but I have been so busy all my life with other things, was left with such a small capital to begin with, and have had such a struggle, to tell the truth, to work up the business, that I have had no opportunity, even if I had the inclination, to get up the subject—a good thing in its way for those who have the time and liking for it. You will really have to excuse me. I am called away to matters of greater importance." This is the man whom Bunyan has pictured with a muck-rake, scraping a few straws together from the dunghill, while angels overhead are offering him a crown of gold, which he sees not, so intent is he on the muck-raking.

To offer God's holy and beautiful Christ to men of this character is to "cast pearls before swine." What is the "truth in Christ" to them? It is not among the things of this life they care for. It may be good and beauti-

ful and true. "He may be holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He may be "chief among ten thousand:" He may be able to give pardon, and righteousness, and grace and glory. But he is not money, He is not business, He is not ten per cent. in the stock market, He cannot give social rank, political success, or commercial security: He is nothing to them, therefore. And so they spurn the offer, trample under foot the Son of God, and call the "blood of the covenant wherewith they are sanctified a common (or unholy) thing."

This man is a sample of Satan's workmanship. He is, perhaps, the devil's masterpiece. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shine into them." He is prouder of this specimen than of all the rest. This is his joy and crown of rejoicing. How he will rejoice over the poor idiot in the evil day! "I covered up the name of God with a sovereign, I hid the church behind the warehouse, I shut out the universe and the glorious stars with the glare of the theatre, and its lessons by the din of the opera! I hid even the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, concealed the beauty and glory of Emmanuel Himself, by that insel, the glitter, and the baubles of the world!" Oh, you insensate fool! to be caught with a bait like that! to take the shadow for the substance, the mortal for the immortal, the earthly for the Divine! Go to the deepest place of my pit, for you are not worth a place in the honours of my kingdom. "Go bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness." So, methinks, even the devil would spurn such an earth-worm—aye! and write in burning letters over the walls of his palace of darkness: "What shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

II. Let us try to "behold the Man" from the *standpoint of the Jews.*—The guilt of Pilate was great. His supercilious contempt for the truth and his indolent defence of an innocent and righteous man at his tribunal have covered his name with infamy, and, to all ages, have stamped his character with opprobrium. Yet the wickedness of the Roman foreigner, great and inexcusable though it be, is not for a moment to be compared with the deep and wilful criminality of the high priest of the Jews. "He that delivereth Me unto thee hath the greater sin." I question if even Judas himself equalled Caiaphas in the calm, intelligent, deeply-rooted, and deliberate hostility to the Saviour. This man, apparently, had learned to know and to hate, with a bitter, unrelenting, unconquerable malignity, the very "Hope of Israel and the Saviour thereof." He seems to have known, as few of that age did, who Christ was; he had gauged the character and work of the Redeemer,

and even had a glimpse of the nature of the Atonement. "It is expedient," he said, "that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation perish not." And "being high priest that same year, he prophesied this." Here, then, was light of the clearest, knowledge of the deepest, and yet a calm, wilful, deliberate sinning against the light! The motive, too, is distinctly discernible in his words: Lest the Jews should lose their material and political inheritance in the establishment of a spiritual kingdom; "lest the Romans should come and take away both our place and nation."

And such was the standpoint of Caiaphas and the Jews. They saw the light, and hated it. They knew the truth, and rejected it. They could not resist the evidence that Jesus was the Christ: but He was a Christ so different from Him whom they expected and desired that they cried: "Away with Him; away with Him! Crucify Him; crucify Him!"

Here is another and far more perilous standpoint from which to behold the Man—to look upon Christ and His religion as something to be hated, and opposed, and banished from the earth: to regard goodness as an enemy; to look upon the Bible as a book to be scoffed at: to reckon the Church an eyesore and the Sabbath a weariness: to hate Christ's followers, not because you believe them to be hypocrites, but because they are what they are: and to say to Him who died for you and rose again for your deliverance: "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." This is to "behold the Man" from the standpoint of the crucifiers, and to tread on the verge of the very "sin of sins."

Brethren, let me speak solemnly and faithfully of the danger of this class of beholders. The sin that will banish the perpetrators from the presence of the Lord at His coming is not the sin of Adam. That has been atoned for in the cross of the second Adam. We have already all died in Him. The sin that will banish us from the presence of the Lord at His coming will not be the sin of ignorance. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The sin that will banish us from the Lord's presence at His coming will not be any word or deed of ours too heinous in its nature to be forgiven; for there is no exception to the gracious offer: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." But the sin that will banish the perpetrators from the Lord's presence at His coming will be that of rejecting—calmly, wilfully, and persistently rejecting—the greatest offer which God has made to us—the offer of His Son as our personal Saviour, the Lord from Heaven. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name

of the only-begotten Son of God." To hear the Gospel, and persistently to reject it; to know Christ's love, and to spurn it; to learn what His will is, and disregard it; to count up the blessings he can give, and prefer those of the world; and to live and die in that rebellion—that is to commit "the sin that hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Yes; and solemn and awe-inspiring the thought is—that every time the appeal is made and you refuse to respond to it, every time the Spirit strives and you resist Him, every time your conscience stirs and you give no heed to its warning, you are hardening yourselves for that crowning wickedness—crucifying the Lord afresh.

III. "Behold the Man" *from the believer's standpoint.*—During the dark months of the "Reign of Terror" in Paris, Mr. Carlyle tells us in his "French Revolution," an old French gentleman walked up to the gate of the city prison, one morning, early, in hope of getting a brief interview with his son, then lying under sentence of death, or what amounted to the same thing, awaiting his trial before the revolutionary tribunal. His name was Loiserolles. As he stood there in the chill morning air, among the crowd of prisoners' relatives, the dreaded cart, so well known in Paris then, that conveyed its daily load to the guillotine, arrived at the prison door. A list of names was produced, and the crowd closed in upon the officer as he read the fatal roll-call. "Loiserolles" was one of the names shouted along the corridor; and "Here! I am Loiserolles!" was answered suddenly from the crowd. The voice was not that of the young prisoner, asleep at that moment in his cell; it was older, feebler, and a little more eager than a prisoner's might be supposed to be; but there was no time and no care to make investigation. The father was taken for the son. He was seized, bound, hurried off, and executed. He died for his boy who was asleep. Not till long afterwards did the younger Loiserolles know at what a sacrifice his life had been purchased.

And, if we may be allowed for a moment to compare small things with great—the doings of men with the acts of the Creator and Judge of the world—I would say that the day of our trial and judgment was past—the morning of our execution had arrived; we, as prisoners of sin and Satan were summoned to receive the death penalty; the sons of men were called. But "I am *the* Son of Man" was the answer given to the challenge. "If, therefore, ye seek Me, let these go their way." Let them sleep on now, and take their rest, till My work of suffering is accomplished and the morning of My res-

urrection has dawned. Then let them awake, and know what I have done for them. "He giveth His beloved sleep."

Brethren, the central truth of our Christianity, the keynote of the Gospel message, the foundation-stone of all our hope-building for time and eternity, is the Saviour that died for us and rose again. He obeyed our summons; He answered to our name; He took our place; He died in our room. "He was wounded for our transgressions." Yes, that poor, despised, buffeted, much-enduring Man at Pilate's tribunal; that friendless Galilean whom they are crowning with thorns, and clothing with mocking purple, and spitting on, and scourging, and exhibiting to the mob; that is no other than our Kinsman and Redeemer, dying for His sleeping kindred!

Can you, my brother man, my fellow sinner, look upon Jesus in this light? Do you see Him to be your Substitute upon the cross; your Intercessor at the throne; your Prince and Saviour, giving you repentance and remission of sins; and, finally, your Judge and King for ever? Do you accept Him? Then you have beheld the Man; then your sins are forgiven, for His name sake; your heart and life will be sanctified by His Spirit and through His truth; your lot on earth will be the lot of His children; and your place at last will be among them that are sanctified. "Happy the people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

"THE SHADOW OF DEATH."

BY THE REV. DAVID DAVIS.

Preached at Regent's-park Chapel, Sunday, February 1. 1885.

ST. LUKE xii. 50.

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

THIS is the burden of an unaccomplished task, and the first announcement of a hidden sorrow. The thought of the great consummation of self-sacrifice in its tragic form and awful mystery had, doubtless, darkened His spirit many a time, and the consciousness of the terrible event that tarried in its coming, had accompanied Him like a dark shadow, but until now He had maintained a rigid reserve, an unbroken silence. This is the first announcement, even to those who are nearest to Him: by-and-by they will understand more fully what He means; for the present enough is revealed.

Thus I start with the restatement of a truth to which I referred in my last sermon ("The Man of Sorrows"). As the greatest burdens of every noble life are not borne in the full glare of public observation, but in the sacred hush of loneliness, so with regard to the greatest of all lives—that of Jesus—the heaviest cross was not that borne on the way from the Prætorium to Golgotha—Simon the Cyrenian could bear that for Him—but that which no man could bear for Him, and which He, therefore, bore Himself, bore on His spirit, during the long period of fixed purpose, and earnest anticipation of the great crisis. Nor can this be confined to His earthly life, He was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." His cross spanned the ages, and His sacrifice on Calvary had in it the cumulative force of millenniums.

When, therefore, Mr. Holman Hunt, in the picture to which I desire to call special attention this evening, represents the Carpenter of Nazareth closing the toil of the day, and possibly of life, in that obscure workshop, and, in the hour of weariness, as He stretches forth His arms, casting a shadow upon the wall behind Him as the clear and full light of Syrian day is rapidly departing, he is representing in his own way a truth with which every student

of the life and work of Christ must be familiar—that the consciousness of a terrible death did not dawn upon Him for the first time when arraigned before Pilate, but ever attended Him in the conscious hours of His earthly existence as it had been present with Him in His eternal purpose.

The scene is the carpenter's workshop at Nazareth. In the foreground, and as the central figure, is Jesus the Carpenter, in an upright attitude, and in the full vigour and bloom of youth, at the close of the day, as I have already intimated, in utter weariness, and extending His arms by way of momentary relaxation. His head is thrown backwards and toward the right. His countenance is expressive of utter exhaustion, and yet in the half-open mouth we trace great tension amounting to self forgetful absorption in some all-important theme or fact. His blue, lustrous eyes, looking upward into the heavens, are full of sad entreaty, and yet fixed with steadfast purpose, and luminous with keen, incisive vision. It would seem as if those eyes are fixed upon an awful and perplexing mystery, into which, however, they will gaze steadfastly until they pierce it through.

On the left, kneeling down among the shavings of that humble dwelling, is Mary the mother of Jesus, opening an ivory casket, her right hand holding up the cover, thus revealing its contents—a crown, a censer, and gorgeous Oriental robes—the gifts of the wise men on their mysterious visit thirty years ago. But she has scarcely opened that ivory chest and disarranged the upper folds of a robe with her left hand, when her attention is suddenly arrested by the shadow which the figure of her Son, drawn almost to full height and with arms extended, casts upon the wall on her right. The slender form of Mary kneeling with her back toward her Son and partly toward us, her easy natural attitude only intensified by the startled turn of the head toward the shadow on the wall, thus revealing her thoughts while concealing her face, are represented with consummate skill.

We like the picture all the more because the only countenance we can see is that of Jesus Christ. The face of Mary has, as a rule, occupied too prominent a place in Christian paintings. We like this painting, too, all the better for the humble surroundings which we find in it. It is a humble workshop. Mary, so far from being represented as sitting upon a throne crowned and bejewelled, as she is so often represented by the old masters, is here presented to us in the blue garb and white head-dress of a poor woman of Nazareth, and kneeling amid surroundings of honest toil and honourable poverty. The picture thus commends itself to us first of all because of its *reality*—its unflinching adherence to fact, and its loyal devotion to local truth.

In passing, we would gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness as Protestant Christians to that "brotherhood of Pre-Raffaellite painters" who, in profound loyalty to Nature and Fact, in the courage of their deliberate convictions, and the might of their earnest purpose, have broken the bonds of convention, and represented the great facts of our religion more as they were, and less as the old masters had pictured them. Raffaelle was a great painter, no doubt, and deserves, as such, to be held in high esteem by posterity. He departed from the fantastic extravagances of his predecessors; the crown and jewels of Mary, to wit, were put aside, but he, nevertheless, did not devote his genius to the truthful representations of facts. Mary is represented as an Italian mother. His pictures abound in anachronisms and incongruities and bear evident traces of popish influence. For instance, Mr. Ruskin calls attention to the fact that Raffaelle, in representing our Lord as appearing after His resurrection to the seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee, places the *twelve* apostles on the canvas, Peter occupying the prominent position among them, in order to maintain the popish doctrine of Peter's pre-eminence, &c. It will be thus seen that whatever may be thought of Raffaelle as master of his art, he cannot be accepted as a competent, or at least, safe guide in his representations of Scripture events. The followers of Raffaelle did not depart from his serious faults, and thus Christian art was repudiated by the great Protestant reformers as being utterly at variance with the facts and spirit of the Gospel. We maintain the same attitude. We cannot accept Raffaelle and his successors as Christian teachers, or their paintings as helpful to the right understanding of Scripture, applicable to the study of our Lord's recorded life. The veriest child taught the incidents of that wondrous life will readily note the incongruities with which such paintings abound. We owe it to that brotherhood of pre-Raffaellite artists—Messrs. Holman Hunt, Millais, Rossetti, and others—that now consistent with our views of truth, with our clear realization of the life of Christ and Scriptural incidents should be recorded faithfully, we can study their sacred paintings and accept them as helps to the understanding of Scripture. We hail the day in which Christian art has recognized the desirability of being true to fact, and when the traditions of painters, like the traditions of other men, give place to the truth as it is in Jesus.

The stern truthfulness of this painting charms us. We know that it has shocked some. But let us test the value of such sensitiveness. We know from the gospels that as a matter of fact the Saviour of men was once a humble carpenter, who toiled day by day to earn His bread; we also know

that Mary was not a queen, crowned with gold, and clad in gorgeous robes, but that she was a poor woman of Nazareth, a carpenter's wife, and a carpenter's mother. Are we shocked by these *facts?* Are we shocked by the story of the manger, or the flight into Egypt, the return to Nazareth, and by the designation "carpenter" as applied to Christ? If not, then let Christian art be true to Christian history. Let us not think that the Christianity of to-day must rest on any other basis than simple, austere truth, and that it can triumph on any other lines than those which are laid down by Infinite wisdom in the events of the birth and of the life of humiliation that followed.

Men were shocked in His day with His lowly birth and humble toil. "Jesus of Nazareth" was a painful enigma to His contemporaries. He had been known among them as a carpenter, but now He manifested such wisdom, and performed such mighty works, as were utterly inconsistent with the traditions of that calling. There were certain conventionalisms to which they—like most of us—clung dearly, certain local and social sentiments which they did not let go readily, although toil was held more honorable by the Jews than any ancient people. They had supposed that wisdom and power belonged to certain privileged classes, moved in certain circles and grooves, and were the outcome of a certain training. The carpenter's shop was not among the recognized places in which men sought a teacher, much less a Saviour. Hence they asked, "Is not this the carpenter?" &c.

What a wonderful Gospel is this then, which deliberately defies human conventionalisms, and bids the world recognize in the carpenter's shop the place where for years He who was the Saviour of the world remained unknown, and from which He went forth to bear His Cross! It is the same Gospel as that which bade the magi and the shepherds alike look to the manger for their King.

The painting under our consideration emphasizes that; and it is a significant fact that among those who have purchased engravings of it *working men* are very prominent. They love to think of the great Saviour as having tasted of *toil* as well as of sorrow. The painting is, I believe, presented to the corporation of Manchester, and there those hardy, vigorous and strong-minded artizans love to look on the Carpenter of Nazareth and learn what *honor* the Divine One conferred upon labor, and what *dignity* upon honest toil, in that He Himself engaged in it.

They learn too from it the *sacredness which may attach to honest poverty*, the poverty that will not admit of indulgence but is grateful for the necessities of life. There is a part of a pomegranate on the bench, the humble refreshment

of which Jesus must have often partaken. The modest garb in which Mary, too, is clad, and all the accessories of the painting show an ordinary humble home. Thus the Redeemer of the world was not only during His public ministry but all His life time identified with poverty. What a *preliminary* Gospel, at least, is this to those who are engaged in toil and happy in comparative poverty.

But this leads them a step further. The transition in our Lord's life which that painting represents is familiar to them. He is about to leave the burden of toil for a far heavier one: and He has known this all along. In the carpenter's shop there had been an unseen cross upon His shoulders. And now He is about to leave the humble home where He had been for thirty years, and the widowed mother who, for all that period, had pondered in her heart strange and conflicting things. It is the last evening of toil in the workshop, and yet, as any true workman would think, *not the last act*. I do not think for a moment that the artist desired to convey that impression. The saw is in the board, which is but partly sawn, and one's conception of our Lord is this, that even as a carpenter He would not close that portion of His life with any task unfinished, or the workshop in confusion, that He who, later on, in anticipation of a greater task, exclaimed, "I must do the work of Him who hath sent Me while it is day," when He left the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, left it with every task finished. It is, however, the last view we have of Jesus as the toiling one, and just preceding the severance of close bonds of home and kindred for the sake of bearing His cross.

It is at this moment that Mary is represented as being startled by the shadow as she is about to look into the casket associated with which there was a strange and unfurnished history. Some are displeased with this. Such a casket in such a work-shop? they ask. They forget that the sacred narrative is instinct with paradox, and that the picture to be fateful cannot but be paradoxical. Is it at all unlikely that having received these treasures in the manger she should have kept them in her humble home: that a woman of such retentive force, of whom we read that she kept alike the sayings of the shepherds and of her youthful Son in her heart, should have also kept these symbols of royalty through all these years of waiting? It was *her* duty to keep the treasures, it was the duty of *another* to fulfil the promise given by angelic lips. The artist represents her as having kept them. What the wise men gave her in addition to gold, frankincense and myrrh, the artist conjectures to be a crown, a censer, robes, &c., such gifts as the Magi were likely to bring. The exigencies of art demand that there should be some such representation.

All that the artist cares to show, however, seems to be that Mary's thoughts are fixed upon the past, upon certain incidents in her history which make the present exceedingly perplexing. Doubtless, she remembers the announcement of the angel, the prophecy of Simeon, the story of the shepherds, and, above all, now the visit of the Magi. She belonged to a royal family, "reduced" as we would say in modern phraseology; but the birth of her Son was announced as that of the long-looked-for King of Israel. Since then thirty years have passed away, and events seem to contradict the announcement of Gabriel and the song of the angels. Her heart is perplexed, and probably weary of waiting. The great mystery of the birth has not yet been solved; Mary cannot understand why those gifts should have ever been brought, following as they did the angelic announcement and song, if her Son to the close of life is to be a carpenter. While she thus ponders, the shadow upon the wall arrests her attention; she turns and sees by that shadow that her Son is weary and overcome with exhaustion. That toil which reached the point of exhaustion she knows is the penalty of sin. It is a fulfilment of the words spoken to Adam, "By the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread." There her great Son, the Son of promise, bears in common with others at least the first penalty of sin. Shall He bear the second—death—"return unto the ground"? She finds a new significance in the words of Simeon, "a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." In her Son's exhaustion she sees the possibility that, sinless as He is, there is yet death before Him. We are not concerned to know whether Mary anticipated more, and the painter is not concerned to tell us. He calls that shadow "The Shadow of Death," not "The Shadow of the Cross," by which it is so frequently called and thus confused with another picture, tender, but of less significance than this. "What?" Mary may well have asked, "after the things I have heard and seen, is He to be a Son of weariness to the last, and close all in the rest of death?" The shadow seems to say "Yes, one is prophetic of the other." Mary looks at that; we do not see her countenance, but we think we understand something of the conflict of feeling in that motherly heart.

We again look at the central figure, and we think we can see in the "It is finished" of the weary Carpenter a prophecy of that other "It is finished:" that He is yet to exclaim with outstretched arms. For it is not only a face of weariness, but also of strong purpose. He is about to begin another period of toil and weariness. The workshop has fulfilled its purpose. Its toil has been a preparation. There, too, chiefly upon the window and partly

upon the bench, the painter, with true insight, has represented a scroll of the ancient Scripture partly unrolled, telling the story of another and higher preparation which in its result confounded priests, rabbis, and people, when they exclaimed, "What wisdom is this which is given unto Him?"

The preparation is now complete. This is the hour of transition. The consciousness of larger duties, of a heavier burden, rushes upon Him. He is about to step out into the world as the Saviour of the world, and to bear all that that involves. Ere He leaves that workshop there is a burden of as yet a hidden ministry resting upon Him. From this time forth until the hour when He will bear His cross from the Prætorium the consciousness will grow upon Him in depth and intensity that He has "a baptism to be baptized with," and how He is "straitened until it be accomplished!" We rightly speak of the cross and Calvary as the instrument and scene of suffering; but in doing so we too often ignore the hidden burden which rested upon His soul during long years of preparation, and specially those three years of public ministry when until now He was not able to give a hint to His disciples, and now in such general terms that they did not understand their significance. This was the burden which to the very last moment He bore alone. Such exclamations as "How long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you?" — "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"—'Ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone"—reveal to us the great Saviour of men bearing His cross alone, patiently, unobserved, without sympathy even from His disciples, because they could not enter into the meaning of that anguish. This is the baptism that He has to be baptized with, of which He is so conscious. It is the loneliness of Jesus Christ in sorrow, and the suspense of an unaccomplished task that we have here. This very suspense intensifies the anguish. The moment for performing the great act of self-sacrifice has not yet arrived; to use His own words, His "hour is not yet come," and thus the burden becomes all the heavier for the tardy advance toward Calvary, where He will lay it down for ever.

"A baptism to be baptized with." We differ with regard to the mode of baptism when we speak of it as an ordinance of the Christian Church; but there is no one who suggests that there is any other meaning to be attached to baptism here than immersion in suffering and sorrow. Christ has announced in the preceding verse that He has come to set the world on fire — a fire that shall purify the good and consume the evil in the world. He adds, "What will I"—or what can I desire more—"if it be already kin-

dled?" as if He said, "This is, indeed, the consummation of my desire, the goal of my high ambition; but before that can come to pass I have 'a baptism to be baptized with,' I have to be encompassed with grief, overwhelmed with anguish, 'and how am I straitened until it be accomplished.'" This is the burning desire of One who is all but consumed with an earnest purpose which as yet cannot be fulfilled. When at length the hour came He steadfastly set his face toward Jerusalem. There was the rejoicing of One who was ready for the final test, the determination of one yearning for "the hour," which had in it boundless issues. "The Shadow of Death" had accompanied Him long enough, let the *great reality* now come; let it "*be accomplished*" "*finished*." This is the earnest desire of One ready for His task.

Into the details of the picture I will not further enter, save to say that to one who can only judge them from their resemblance to those things which they are supposed to represent, they are realized with wonderful precision, and reveal a perfect mastery of archæological drawing and modelling. It has been my misfortune not to have seen the painting for thirteen years, and my memory has only been refreshed by a brief glance at the engraving, which, alas! leaves a sense of blank upon the mind, since the engraving necessarily fails to reproduce the glowing color and natural hues which pervade the original painting. To say this is to say much concerning the production of that artist, of whom Mr. Ruskin somewhere says that he "was the first that cast true sunshine on the grass."

In connection with this true representation of natural scenery, there is one thing more in the painting to which I would call your attention, and with that I close. Mr. Hunt, with that special aptitude of his for introducing a bit of charming scenery into most of his pictures, whether it be by an open door or otherwise, presents a wide expanse of landscape through the two arched windows behind Jesus and the carpenter's bench near which He stands. The spectator is permitted to see that. It is a piece of scenery which unites the present with the past and with the future. I will not for a moment discuss the question as to whether that precise landscape could by any probability be seen from the house of Mary; that would be a fruitless and barren discussion. The present village is too low down in an amphitheatre of hills to command this view. There is only one opening revealing an expanse of country from that elevation, and that is to the West. But higher up, nearer the summit of the hills, is one of the most charming landscapes in Palestine. That landscape you can see through those windows. You look in a southward direc-

tion and can see the hills of Galilee, the hill of Precipitation, over the brow of which the people of Nazareth sought to cast the Christ headlong; beyond which you see the great plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon, the battle-field of the ages, and on the west the Mountains of Gilboa, of such tragic interest, because, on its high places, Saul and Jonathan and the flower of the Jewish army were slain, an event which has been immortalised by David's deathless wail, "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul as though he had not been anointed. . . . Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O, Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. . . . How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" Crossing that plain there is a distant road which we cannot see, leading from the north to Jerusalem far away beyond—Jerusalem the murderess of the prophets, over which the Christ shed bitter tears, and beyond whose walls He also shed His blood. There, as you look out of that little workshop, you look toward the city far away where the fulfilment of that shadow is to take place; and thus the outlook is made to add significance to the scene within.

Any picture conceived with reverent fidelity to the recorded facts of our Lord's life, which also by the adoption of any pure symbolism centres our vision on Christ and not on Mary, and upon the cross as the central object of our hope, as it is of God's revelation of love, we expect as an aid to our devotions, and as helpful to our studies of that Great Life and Wondrous Death. I commend this theme to you to-night. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper which we are about to observe but symbolises His death; the symbols are of no importance apart from the help they render in realising the great historic and permanent fact. It is our privilege to-night to enter into the high significance of all, for without the breaking of His body there could be no redemption, and without the shedding of His blood there is no remission of sins. May we see upon the cross the stricken Christ, and recognize in Him our all-sufficient Redeemer, "For it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

THE CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPIST.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.—IN MEMORIAM.

BY THE VERY REV. DR. BRADLEY.

DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, Oct. 11, 1885.

"For he shall deliver the poor when he crieth, the needy also, and him that hath no helper. He shall be favorable to the simple and needy, and shall preserve the souls of the poor. He shall deliver their souls from falsehood and wrong, and dear shall their blood be in his sight."—PSALM lxx. 12—14.

You will not wonder that these verses have come unbidden to me as I prepared to speak to you to-day. I have read them to you in the form in which they have rung in my own ears during the week that is past in the familiar and remembered rhythm of our Prayer-book version. One touch has been added to their significance by our last revision, which, by substituting in the 13th verse, the words, "he shall have pity on," for "he shall be favorable to," has given a fresh emphasis to the note of tenderness and compassion which runs through one of the most stately and most stirring hymns of these ancient hymns of Israel. It is a Psalm that from the first word to the very last may well haunt men's ears and linger in their memories. I read but lately the remarks of a critic who pronounces that it falls below the general level of Hebrew poetry. He tells us that this rhyme is borrowed from a prophet, that it is an echo from the book of Job, above all, that the reiterated references to the poor, the oppressed, the helpless, the needy, recur in it with what he calls a wearisome monotony. I have no fear that any one before me who has read the Psalm will indorse this judgment. What is its subject? We might say that it read almost like a coronation oath, for it spoke of a monarch himself, and a monarch's son who is to rule far and wide over vast regions, over tributary kings, and over the hearts of men. In its opening

words it invokes for this king the divine and royal gift of righteousness, "Give the king thy judgments,"—thy justice, that is—"O, God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son." And it pictures in glowing accents of promise or of aspiration the bright perspective of a golden age, of a changed and prosperous world, of a universal dominion and an imperishable name. But note that the title of this unmeasured greatness and of this unbounding happiness is to rest on righteousness; on that care for justice that is inherent in our race—above all, on that aspect of justice so truly prized, then, as now, in Eastern lands, the righteousness that turns an attentive ear to the voice of those who have no gifts to lavish, no bribes to tender, no officials or favorites to plead their cause. "All kings shall fall down before him," we read. "All nations shall do him service. For he shall deliver the poor when he crieth; the needy also, and him that hath no helper. He shall deliver their souls from falsehood and wrong, and dear shall their blood be in his sight."

We may call it a coronation oath; but its accents will touch a fiber in human hearts as long, in its own language, as the sun and moon endure—in new republics and in ancient monarchies, wherever there are wants that need a helper, wherever there are yearnings deep down in unsatisfied hearts for a happier world. Do any here remember a page in which it was quoted nearly forty years ago almost at full length by the then young Charles Kingsley, and placed by him as the last utterance on dying lips? We need not stop to ask which of the long roll of the kings of Christendom, famous or forgotten, called forth such an immortal strain. An inscription, added, it may well be, ages later, identifies its author, or, as some would say, its subject with Solomon. We turn away unsatisfied, as aspirations rise too high above the hard experience of the Hebrew monarchy. It reads rather like a twin picture to that revealed to later prophet-poets of the ideal king who ought to come, who would love righteousness and hate iniquity, who "shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth," whose claim to rule over the hearts of men should rest not on birth, or conquest, or power, or resources, but on a Divine beneficence, and righteousness, and tenderness, and compassion. We may all feel that if the reign of Solomon in any

way suggested a picture, in very sacred words, "a greater than Solomon" is here.

You will forgive me, I am sure, if I have lingered for a moment on words in which the sacred writer and singer of that ancient covenant brings into the foreground of a picture of ideal kings and kingly greatness the care for the oppressed, the tenderness for the afflicted, which fills so small a place in the praises of Augustus. Am I wrong in thinking that this and kindred passages, helped with the teaching of the New Testament, went far to mold the ideal of Christian kingship in ages far removed from those singers of Israel, that their spirit breathed from time to time in lands far remote from the Saba, the Arabia, and the Lebanon of which the Psalmist speaks? Do we trace its influence in the life of the medieval king who sleeps beneath this roof amidst his mightier successors? Do we recognize its effect in the story of him whose claim to the veneration of us who worship here rests not on imagined miracles, or on a half monastic life, but on the belief that he tried earnestly, after the measure of his age and knowledge, to walk in the steps of Him, the Divine and human King, to whom this Psalm points; that he, too, had compassion on the simple and the poor, "the needy, also, and him that hath no helper?"

You will bear with me, also, if for one moment I call your attention to the undertone of sympathy with the oppressed and neglected which runs through so much of the record of that older and sterner dispensation. I have already indicated one or two of its traces. Those of you who are familiar with your Old Testament will discover others in abundance. You will find, again and again, among the denunciations of evil-doers and of personal and national foes, in which tongues that have been bound to follow the accents of Jesus may find it hard to join words that bade men remember that they serve a God not of power only, but of measureless compassion, that "when the poor man cried the Lord Jehovah heard him;" that the highest of all beings was one who "healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." But there may be very few among us who remember a passage, a terrible passage, I might call it, in the mysterious Book of Job. It is a picture whose lineaments are defaced and almost obliterated in our older version, but they stand out in the impressive freshness of the original in the new

revision. The despairing patriarch in his darkest mood pictures the laborers of his day (whence comes the picture we know not) living the lives, as he says, of the very brute creation, [illegible] naked, parched with thirst, as they tread out the [illegible] for others, starving with hunger as they bend [illegible] sheaves; and from crowded cities goes up the voice of misery, yet God, he adds in his bitterness, putteth not down in His time the iniquity. The words seem to speak to us across the [illegible] We [illegible] same thoughts embodied in moving poetry and in [illegible] who drew their sad inspiration, alas! from [illegible] amidst smiling English scenery, and from English [illegible] cities, and English mines. And thank God [illegible] and such thoughts work their due and best effect in the hearts of those to whom God has given something of the gift which [illegible] invokes. We have seen it in the life, the long and fruitful life, of Ashley, dear to the hearts of the humble and the [illegible] here to honor his memory to-day. Oh, that we could have [illegible] more abundantly three days ago! It may seem strange to you, [illegible] it seemed for a moment half unnatural to myself that the struggles and feelings which that life and character [illegible] utterance in the phrases of a Psalmist of old, [illegible] of the words of Him whom he served so truly, [illegible] one day with those whom He will call to the [illegible] much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto Me! Yet you, who love those ancient [illegible] them speak in Christian churches the highest truths, the [illegible] ing of the Christian life. There is little fear to-day of our forgetting the fresh light which the revelation of God in Christ threw, in the fulness of time, on the darkness of the older church and of the older world.

We know what a new and wider significance that [illegible] into words like those of my text, what an imperious claim upon our hearts and lives His teaching has given to the half-[illegible] of the Psalmist here and the prophet there. That [illegible] tenderness for the afflicted, is no longer the [illegible] or the attribute of a patriarchal chief; it is the very badge of Christ, the mark which every follower of the Saviour must wear in one form or

another. Its form may be very various, but in one form or another it is incumbent on us, one and all, on the thousands who met within and without this church so lately, on the hundreds who are here to-day. If our Saviour's teaching has any meaning at all, if it has any authority at all, it has in it a call to all or all who would serve Him to the practice of something, we need not shrink, we have no warrant to believe, will ever become instinct, when the ages are fulfilled, and the last enemy has been swallowed up in victory. We read in that teaching of a summons to a new duty, shall we say, a new virtue unknown to the ruling races of the old world? a call for the championship of the unchampioned, the defense of the undefended. We may call it in its more striking forms the virtue of Christian philanthropy; but we cannot read our Gospels or penetrate into the spirit of our Saviour's teachings without seeing that if that teaching is to bear one day the full fruit of the seed which its Master sowed, it must not be in special grace cultivated here and there by individuals, practiced, admired, and honored by the many. It must represent a spirit, inspiring, ideal, and animating all who call themselves His people. The nation that is indifferent to the wrongs or sufferings of any class among its members is no Christian nation. The Church that is backward in listening to the cry of the servile or oppressed is no child of Christ. The man or woman whose heart is steeled against human distress is no disciple of Jesus.

You will forget that the words of the Psalmist will retain their undying power. Christian beneficence will come before us from time to time on an heroic scale, and it will be surely needed, and it will still cast its ancient spell over the souls of men. We know well what drew to these doors the presence and the hearts of representatives of all who speak our tongue, to do honor to the very dust of one who had earned a claim to the homage of mankind that kings and conquerors and statesmen and thinkers might greatly envy. It was the sense that one had passed away whose grave alone would have given an added sacredness to these famous downs, the splendid achievements of whose long and honored life might well rank with the noblest that are recorded here. How often do those who have studied, with an interest that never dies, the silent records of the long history of our country, which form a part of the treasures of this ancient city, pause for a moment before the monument of Wilber-

force or stand for an instant over the grave of Livingstone? They forget for a space all other greatness and think of lives devoted, in the service of Christ, to those who can tender no thanks, make no return. The very least in the kingdom of God is greater than they. And our thoughts are to-day with one who had caught from their Master and his the inspiration that first determined his course, shaped his life, and guided his long career. You do not need to be told how more than half a century has passed since he of whom I speak opened for us, we may almost say, a new chapter in the rich history of the worthies of England. You know how, born in a position and endowed with gifts which would have opened to him a path of political eminence which an English nobleman might justly covet, the young inheritor of an aristocratic vantage ground, set aside in the prime of early manhood all personal ambition, all self-interested party aims, and gave himself, with a simple-minded devotion, to a career which promised no advancement, which led through paths which no statesman had explored, into waters which no politician had marked out. You know with what indomitable resolution, with what elastic and expansive sympathy he gave himself henceforth to forward in various forms the cause of the helpless, the cause of the neglected, the welfare of the poor, the downtrodden, the unfriended. And it has been a long career.

We—the older of us—remember how, with the names of Wilberforce and Clarkson, which we had been taught to honor almost from our cradle, came unto us the names of Stanley and Ashley, who were fighting as hard a battle against a no less appalling form of slavery at home. Yes; the older among us may cherish among the tattered recollections of their boyhood tales of that early struggle on behalf of little children now grown old. And it was but the other day that the young children of the present generation, the little children of the courts and alleys of Westminster, came to meet the veteran leader in all good works, as he stood, erect and bare-headed, unbowed by wearing sickness or by the weight of years, amid the lengthening shadows of the summer evening. They heard him once more give his humble friends their annual greeting, and speak to them for the last time of the simple teaching of the flowers which they tended in homes where his loss will be lamented.

And between these recent memories and those far off days, what a roll of

peaceful memories could be emblazoned upon a banner that might well hang among those that wave in yonder chapel or beneath the roof of Windsor! A young subaltern in the closing campaign against negro slavery sprang to the head of what seemed a forlorn hope, advancing, in the enforced absence of its leader, against an iron system which was crushing in hopeless misery the tender children of our northern countrymen. His heart yearned over the doom of the rising generation of a race whose gifts of powerful intellect—I quote his own words—of great determination, of strong affections, struck one who had been reared where he now lies at rest, among the rural peasantry of our southern counties. Let the bitter memory of the long struggle against indifference, and stupidity, and erroneous interpretations of the laws that should rule the lives and actions of nations sleep in oblivion. Yet I can not but remind you of words which I read for the first time since Thursday last. They are those of a gifted Spanish gentleman who, eighty years ago—early, as you see, in this century—stood half dizzy among the bewildering whirl and endless motion of the machinery in one of our hives of industry. He watched the "unnatural dexterity," as he says, with which the tiny fingers of those helpless little creatures plied their ceaseless task from early morn until late evening; he listened to the praises of a system which enabled these almost babies—"doomed," he said, "to grow up diseased, ignorant, and dissolute"—to support themselves, as he was told, and enrich their nation; and he thanked God that he was not an Englishman. "Better," he said, "the stagnation of Spain than the white slavery of England." I thought, as I read his words, that they were even more impressive than the stanzas of the gifted poetess which, forty years later, made English hearts ache as, speaking of the joyous playfulness of the youth of all creation—of the lamb, the fawn, the bird, the flower—they described the young children, "Weeping bitterly, weeping, in the play time of the others, in the country of the free." Yes, slavery on the soil of the free, in the cradle of freedom! I dare not stop to ask whether all its forms are extinct among us.

To return. We know how, before the victory so long and stubbornly disputed was won, another cry of woe came to the ear of that knight of the holiest of all orders, that of Him who said "Suffer little children to come unto Me." We have been reminded but lately, how the

revelation which he made of the degradation of women, and the suffering of children in the sunless mine stirred to its depths the heart of England, and how wise and beneficent legislation brought relief to the gloomy sphere of work; and we have been reminded also how his sympathies went out here in London to those against whom the heart of civilized society had been steeled for ages, how he won the confidence of the yet unimprisoned thief. He refused to despair of the unreclaimed thousands of the poor, unhappy, homeless, shivering children, growing up ignorant in the midst of knowledge, savages in the midst of civilization, heathen in the midst of Christianity. We can well believe how his aid was welcomed by the busy men and women of every class, from the humble crossing-sweeper to the educated lawyer, whowere giving without fee or reward—I quote his own words—their time, their talents, and their hearts to the work of diving down into the recesses of human misery, reversing the policy of the evil one, "sowing the good seed while the nations slumbered and slept." Time would fail me if I detained you even to enumerate the almost multitudinous fields of civilizing Christian work in which, early and late, he was a toiler or an inspirer. "In the morning sow thy seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand," seemed the motto of the morning and evening of his life. The once uncared-for lunatic, the poor lodger of the noisome and crowded dwelling, the forgotten sailor lad, the ragged child of the gutter, the blind, the cripple, the outcast, the neglected, the despised, the ignorant, found in him not a helper only, they found not a champion only; but one who could recognize, not in merely sentimental and flattering periods, but in manly sympathy the image of God, which, however, defaced and marred, those sons of a common Father still bore about them. There are some who will never forgot how, in the very summer that has just passed from us, he left a bed of suffering and exhaustion to aid those who were anxious to link the great name of Gordon to an offer to carry out a work dear to Gordon—the cause of the neglected boys of England. They will remember how his too apparent weakness seemed to disappear as he warmed with the memory of his brother soldier of Christ; how he seemed, as some of us felt, to raise and ennoble the tone of the whole meeting by the note which he struck as he reminded us, in simple and earnest language, of the value,

of the worth of those young, ill-used boys whom we had met to succor. We felt, some of us, that he had entered into the secret of the apostle of his Lord who bids us not only to love the brotherhood, but to honor all men. And in this lies, no doubt, one secret of the honor in which his name is held. The humane cattle-monger, who has been encouraged by him to treat with kindly gentleness the poor dumb beast that shares his daily toil, knew that he had found no flattering demagogue who tried to win his voice for selfish ends, but a friend who saw in him one whom, in the words of the ancient patriarch, the same God had made, the same God had fashioned; one for whom the same Christ had lived and died. The lowliest fellow-worker—and he had, thank God, many such—knew well and honored with simple and generous reverence his desire, as he said, for nothing but the welfare of the lost, and to spend and be spent in the service of their common Lord and Master.

One word more. We have been reminded of late with an inevitable, yet, perhaps, needless, emphasis that his theology is of what is called a narrow type, that he found it hard to sympathize with those who are on this side or on that, who differed at all widely from his own views of the truths and doctrines which form the common creed of Christendom. I am not very careful to dispute to-day the assertion or to put in any countervailing pleas. With what entire accord will every section of the servants of Him who rebuked even the apostle of love for a well-meant momentary exclusiveness unite in the prayer that their own hearts and those of many [illegible] may be something of the intensity, of the devotion to the best of all causes, which was the mainspring of the life of him with whom they agreed or from whom they differed. Churchmen of every shade, Catholic and Non-conforming members of the great Church of Christ, let us join in the earnest prayer that the terrible depths of ignorance and misery, which he not long ago reminded us still remained in the [illegible], may be faced in a spirit as generous and as noble as that of him who has just bequeathed us his example. When, in that long half century of battle in the cause of helplessness or misery, did he, who felt so keenly the wrongs of the oppressed, and whose ear was so open to the cry of anguish and injustice, say a word that added one touch of bitterness to the sense of pain

or wrong? When did he try to further the cause most dear to him by appeals to the stupidity or the envy, or by practicing on the ignorance of those whom he loved to succor? To bind together man to man, class to class; to reconcile the alienated sections of society; to raise up a nobler state of feeling, to awaken in the wealthy a desire to fill up, by ready help and friendly intercourse and kindly language, the gulf that separates them from their less favored brethren; to teach men, in the words of his statesman friend whose present enforced silence we are all lamenting, to believe that there is no teaching, no influence that so increases and enlarges natural gifts and talents as the desire to use what we possess, however little, for the good of others; to impress upon his countrymen (to quote yet once more his own words) "the importance to the future history of the world of raising the educational, the moral, the spiritual condition of a nation which year by year is sending forth its swarms to people the vast solitudes and islands of another hemisphere; these were his aims. Where is the tomb beneath this roof that is tenanted by one of a wider and higher purpose and of nobler achievements? The laborer's task is done, his battle day is ended; he has ended his task, even as he would have wished to end it; working faithfully until close to the very end, little bent by the weight of four score and four years, long unsubdued by a period of suffering and weakness which might well have warranted a longer interval of entire repose before entering on the rest which remaineth for the people of God. And he has died also as he would have wished to die, if not beneath his own roof, yet with sons and daughters around him, and with mind unclouded to the very last, watchful over his own spirit until he resigned it to his God, guarding himself to the most solemn of all moments against a word of murmur or impatience. How many thousands will have looked on that bed of sickness as the gate of heaven! From how many hearts—let me borrow the thought of one whose eloquence I cannot borrow—will go up the cry, "May my spirit rest where his rests!" Father, in Thy gracious keeping leave we now Thy servant.

THIRST SATISFIED.

BY THE REV. CANON KNOX-LITTLE.

Preached in St. George's, Botolph, on Sunday, November 2, 1884.

"My soul is athirst for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the presence of God?"—PSALM xlii. 2.

THE verse, dear friends, which I have read to you for a text is one of those verses which justify in the highest degree the action of the Christian Church in selecting the Hebrew psalter as, in fact, her prayer-book. There are many passages, as you will feel with me, in the Hebrew psalter that express in a very high degree the wants of the human soul; but perhaps there is no passage more telling, more touching, more searching, more expressive than that solemn and that exalted sentiment which is spoken in the text, "My soul is athirst for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the presence of God?" The passage is a justification, then, of the action of the Christian Church. People sometimes ask why in the daily service, why on Sundays, you rehearse the Psalms, which have about them so much that is incomprehensible; so much that requires explanation; why there are those tremendous denunciations of enemies; why there are those prayers that seem at first sight to touch wants that we modern people scarcely know; but if you want a real justification and a handy answer you may fall back upon the general texture of the psalter as expressed by such solemn words as those of the text. If you would find any document, any volume, that will speak your thoughts best about and toward eternity, you can not select a better than the Hebrew psalter, for the general tone and temper of its teaching is the cry of the soul for God.

And then there is another thought upon the threshold of such a subject that demands our attention. This verse of the text, being a sort of example or representative verse of the psalter, expresses to us—does it

not?—the attitude and the mission of the Christian Church. The attitude. For what is the position, dear friends, of the Christian Church? What is the struggle of Christian souls except, in the midst of a world that is quite complicated with difficulties, in the midst of a world that is overwhelmed with sorrow, in the midst of a time of severe temptation, to constantly rise and gaze high above the thought of evil, and gaze toward the sun of brightness, and cry for God? And what is the mission of the Christian Church? Is it not to help men and women in their struggle and their sorrow to forget at least at times their pettinesses and degradation to rise to better standards and loftier ideals, and cry for God? And if that be the mission of the Christian Church, then I hold—and that is my point this morning—that that is the justification of such noble efforts as have been made in your church to enable so great, so sinful a city as London, to have at least moments of relaxation from its world-wide weariness, moments of pause in the pursuit of its sin, and to call it back from that which is overpowering though transient—to ask it to pass them in the ministrations of religion. What is the object of such a church as this? Why, buried among your buildings in the midst of this great, powerful, sinful city—why has it a mission for eternity? Why is it good that you should do your best? Why is it praiseworthy and beautiful that your rector and churchwardens should have exerted themselves to the utmost to make this church what it ought to be? Why? Because there is not a man or woman in London, not one in this bustling crowd, not one in this confusion of commerce, not one in this sink of sin, but might say—yes, ought to say, and must ultimately feel, and should now be taught to realize that the soul has one satisfaction, one only—"My soul is athirst for God, for the living God." Well, if that be so, can we be wrong, dear friends, can we waste our time, if we ask ourselves this morning something quite practical about this thirst of the soul?

And, first of all, I submit that in such a verse as this, and in such a work as this, we are face to face with one of those great governed contrasts that are found throughout Scripture and throughout human life. I may say, *par parenthèse*, that that is one of the great proofs of sacred Scripture. When some shallow-minded [illegible] philosopher, kicks the sacred Book with the toe of his boot and de-

nounces it because he does not like the measure of Noah's Ark or the exact activity of Jonah's whale, the moment you begin to think beneath those texts, sharpness of speech and those mere quicknesses of the thought, you say this : "There may be this or that about the surface of Scripture which I do not understand or explain, and can not entirely understand ; [illegible] no, not excepting Milton ; no, not even excepting Dante, no, for us English people, making no reserve for Shakespeare—there is no book [illegible] that, after all, expresses that deep, inner, serious [illegible] of myself; the fact that lives when outer facts are dying ; the fact that persists in asserting itself when the noise of the world is still ; the fact that does not care about daylight only, but comes up in the dark ; the fact that whispers low when I am in the crowd, but speaks loud in the darkest night when the clock is ticking on the wall and [illegible] stalked out and stood before me, asserting facts that I can not contradict—there is no book that can speak that [illegible], that thirst, that longing, that desolation, that desire, that [illegible], that possibility of supreme contention and final victory; there is nothing like the Bible that does that." And so wise men, while they admit difficulties, thoughtful men, while they do not controvert the fact that that which is Divine needs larger explanation, fall back—I speak *par parenthèse*, merely in passing, for it is worth remembering—fall back upon such great governed truths as that text to support the Bible. The Bible says, asserts, determines, and insists upon the truth which the Church is insisting upon, which you and I, in our better moments, emphasize and say "Amen" to—the soul is athirst for God. The Bible brings home the great contrast that is present to us all.

Let us dwell, that we may realize this thirst for the soul, upon the contrast. There are, at least, four forms of attraction which are presented, as I suppose, to your soul, certainly to mine. First of all, there is the attraction of natural beauty. If you stand, on a fair August afternoon on the terrace, for instance, at Berne, or on the heights of Chaumont ; if you gaze at the distant Alps crowned with snow which was generated in winter, but which takes the brightness and glory of diamonds in the summer sun ; if coming from the noise and heat of England you first gaze at [illegible] crowned with that whiteness,

struck with the sunlight, you are moved by natural beauty. If you stand in America on the upper reaches of the St. Lawrence, and watch the river as it hurries to its destiny at Niagara; if you see the tossing water writhing almost like living creatures anticipating a dreadful destiny and an awful death; if you watch it as it foams and swells, and cries like an agonized spirit, and then see it giving way to destiny and passing over the fall; or if, rising out of what is tragic in nature, you come to what is homely—if, for instance, you see the chestnut woods of spring with an inspiration of quiet joy, or if you see the elms at Worcester or Hereford in our common England in the autumn time with an inspiration of sorrow; wherever you turn with eye or head, with a feeling in your heart, a thought in your mind, nature demands her recognition; and you London men, in the toil of your struggle, in the noise of your work, in the dust of your confusion of life, when you get your holiday in spring or autumn—unless, indeed, you have passed into the mere condition of a brute—while you still keep the heart of a man, you feel there is something in the apostles of culture, in the teachers of esthetics, in persons who say that beauty is every thing to satisfy the soul. Nature, you say, and you say it justly, says, "Beauty." You find a delight as you gaze upon nature. Yes, dear friends; you are stimulated, you are delighted, you are consoled; there is one thing which you are not—you are not satisfied. Or, quite possibly, you turn to that which seems to English natures more practical and less poetical—you turn to the attraction of activity. You say the poets or the preachers or the dreamers may gaze upon nature; but Englishmen have something else to do—we have to work. You look at the result of activity, and it is splendid. Imagine, picture for a moment, political achievement; picture to yourself the power not only of a mind, but of a personality, of a character which can attract vast millions who have never gazed upon the human expression in the human face—can attract them to great love or to great hatred, can mold the destinies of an empire, can change the current of the time—think of such men as Richelieu, Cavour, or more modern instances, and you understand what is the greatness and the power of the attraction of political activity. Or, to come nearer home, go into your London city, and watch the working of your London mart. What have you before you there?

The activity of the hearts and minds of Englishmen, sending out the force of the life that is in them from the heart that is beating in those tremendous centers to the distances that are only stopped by the most distant frontiers of the world. Your sayings and thoughts are quoted throughout the markets of Europe—yes, throughout the markets of other continents; your actions and decisions make the difference between the decisions and the actions of men that you have never seen, that you never shall see. The Medici were a power in Florence, first as bankers, then as governors. There are men in London who have power throughout the world, not only in Florence, not as professed governors, but as practical governors through the activity of commercial instinct. Certainly, it seems to me quite possible that there may be minds carried away by such a great activity; but that great activity I submit to your deeper, quieter English Sunday thought—that activity will stimulate, will delight, will attract, will intoxicate; one thing it will not do—I am bold to say, it will never satisfy.

And if I may take another instance for a moment, there is this pure intellect, bidding good-by to the political arena, to the commercial strife, saying farewell to the dreams of beauty, and falling back upon the cells of the brain, traversing the corridors of thought and entering first here and there into that labyrinth of instinct or association or accumulative learning. Certainly, there is a power of a delight that the world can never realize outside the region of the brain. If that needs proof you have only, dear friends, to meditate upon such lives as Newton, or Shakespeare, or Kepler; or if you turn to the region of meditative thought, to such lives as our own George Eliot—yes, there is that in the mere exercise of intellect which is intoxicating, which is consoling even to the highest degree. But intellect, after all, finds its frontier. I may say of it what I have said of the esthetic sentiment, what I have said of the active sentiment in man, it attracts, it delights—what is more, I think it even consoles; but the one thing I find about it that to me is perfectly appalling is that it does not satisfy. There are many of you perhaps to-day who will demand that I should take my fourth instance, and will ask that that at least may do its duty. Will it? There is the region of the affections—that region wherein we stray in early spring days as pickers of the spring flowers of our opening life, where suns

are always glorious and [illegible] brighter dawn, where poetry is in all ordinary [illegible] rising to higher heights from hour to hour, where Mays are always Mays and Junes are always Junes, where flowers are ever bursting and there seems no end to our nosegays, no limit to our imaginations, no fetter to our fancies, no restraint to our desires. There is the world, the vast, powerful world, of the passions, purified by exhaustive cultivation into what we call the affections of a higher life. By them we deal with our fellow-creatures; by them, when we are young, we form great friendships; by them, as we grow older, we form around us certain associations that we intend to support us as life goes off. We have all known it. There is the friend, there is the sweetheart, there is the wife, there is the child, there are the dear expressions of that strong heart that after all beats in Englishmen. But as life goes on, first in one object and then by anticipation and terror perhaps in others, we watch those who have been dear to us, and we fear that others who are dear—we watch them pass in dim procession to the grave, and we find, after all, that in the world of affections that old, strange, strange law that pervades one branch of the contrast prevails. It can stimulate, it can support, it can console, it can delight, it can lead to delirium at moments, but it does not satisfy. And, my brothers and sisters, because you and I are born not for a moment, but for infinite moments; not for the struggle of time, but for the great platform and career of eternity—because that is so, never, never, never, if we are true to ourselves, shall we pause in the midst of our mortal pilgrimage until we find and grasp and embrace and love that which satisfies. When you waken up a young heart to that truth, then that heart, as I hold it, is on the path of conversion. When amidst the struggle of sin you have determined the soul to strive after that truth, then that soul is in progress of solid conversion and final perfectability. But, at any rate, all human nature joins that cry of the Christian, and the Bible speaks of it as it always does—its ultimate truth expressing what we need. No; there are many things given, there are many attractions to draw; they will stimulate, they will help, they will console, they will give pleasure; there is one thing that satisfies the immortal, there is one life that meets your need: "My soul is athirst for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before the presence of

God?" Why, dear friends, why is it that these things do not satisfy? There lies a city in the Volscian Hills, fair and beautiful, climbing in its peaks and pinnacles up little ledges of the rocks, and down into the depths of the valleys. And if you wander some two days from Rome, and gaze upon those mountains, historic in their memories and splendid in their beauty, you are struck by the tenderness and the attraction of that city. It is a city of flowers. The flowers stream up its streets in grave procession; they climb up the pillars of churches, embracing them and holding on with arms of deep affection; they laugh in the sunshine, they weep in the shadow, they are shrouded in the clouds of night, but they blaze again in the blaze of the morning. There is the dim funereal ivy, there is the brightness and glow of the purple convolvolus, there is the wild-rose clustering round the windows. They are lying asleep on the doorsteps, they gather themselves into knots as if to gossip and to talk about the language of flowers by the doorways—utterly beautiful! You look at the city with wonder and astonishment—with desire. How wonderful, you say, that church tower covered with its flowers; that altar covered not with flowers, gathered and placed in vases, but with nature's own hand arranging an offering to the living God. These streets that sound no footfall of an angry multitude, but that listen to the footfall of a quiet nature—yes, it is beautiful in the early morning. But stay there until the later afternoon, when the fog begins to gather; stay there until night-time when the miasma begins to rise; stay there until morning, and you are in danger of destruction from poison. It is a land of flowery expression; but it is not a land of real life.

My friends, the activity of man, the poetic faculty of man, all the gifts and all the capacities of man—they are beautiful, they are touching, they are attractive; but if they are all, if they express all that you have to offer, and all that is in you to feel, then they are hollow, or they are poisonous and like that city of flowers. Why? Because there is in you and me a soul that lies behind our thought, although it is more than that thought is underneath our feeling; although there is more than feeling there—a soul that supports our will, and is more than our volition. It thinks, but is not thought; it feels, but is not feeling; it wills but is not volition. There is something deeper in man than his esthetic

desire or his active practice, counting deeper beneath us all than any thing that finds expression, certainly than any thing that finds satisfaction. There is the self; there is myself, yourself; there is that strange, mysterious life of loneliness which [illegible] and thinks and [illegible] and appraises. When, by Divine grace, we escape from the voice of the crowd, and from the cry of custom, from the delirium of desire that poor lonely self within us pleads to us with a cry like the call of the starveling crying up the [illegible] passer by, "Oh, will you gratify desire? Oh, will you gratify pleasure. Oh, will you stimulate activity, and will you leave me alone! I, yourself, your very self, the foundation of your life, the permanent expression of your immortality—I must be satisfied, and [illegible] I know but one satisfaction: 'My soul is athirst for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before the presence of God?'"

If that be true, or if it be approximately true, dear friends, let us ask ourselves this morning these questions. Let us be quite practical. What do you mean, you say for a moment, by the thirst for God? I remember long ago in Paris, in conversation with one whom I deem one of the greatest modern [illegible] thinkers out of the most successful—I remember, when a mere boy, talking to that thoughtful man just at the moment when he was [illegible] and [illegible] of his activity, and gazing with that placid spirit with which [illegible] gazes when he feels that he has done his duty, though the world can see that he has failed—I remember talking to him on [illegible] and what he said, among other things, was this: "In dealing with mankind and in dealing with yourself you must use by [illegible] you must advance from point to point; there is a point of achievement, but you can not reach the point of achievement unless you [illegible] the ladder of progress." I follow his advice. What do we mean by thirsting for God? My friends on the lower round of that ladder, I mean thirsting for and desiring moral truth. I mean that the soul within you is thirsting and imploring for the satisfaction of its moral instincts. Turn for an instant to the Ten Commandments; they are trite, they are ordinary, they are placed before you in the east end of your church after the old custom of your practical, unesthetic and undreaming England. Ask what they mean. Turn to the second table. You are to reverence your

father and mother. Why? Because they are the instruments of life that God gives. You are to reverence life in others in the Sixth Commandment. Why? Because life is the deepest mystery that God can possibly exhibit to you. In the Seventh Commandment—I scarcely like to say, but yet it is wise to repeat, it is necessary to assert it—we are to remember, you and I, when we are young, when we are active, when we are passionate, the great responsibility of man; you are not to trifle with that awful mystery, the transmission of life, life which unites itself with eternal love. You are to remember respect for property, for that which Divine Providence has placed by wise laws in the hands of others. You are to remember that the best of properties is a good character. Finally, in the Tenth Commandment, you are not to forget that Divine Providence guides you, and you are not to murmur and be angry when He guides you who knows the best for you, and when you have done your best. And rising from the second table and coming to the first, you are not to forget that there is one object for every soul, as the text asserts. You are not to forget that a jealousy may be created, ought to be created, if you put any thing before God. You are not to grudge God the restraint of speech, and, thank God, still it is possible to appeal to the wise instincts of England—you are not to grudge on your Sunday the gift of your time. These are the outlines of the grave moral law that runs deep into the heart of the Christian; and I answer that the thirst for God means the thirst within me to fulfill that grave moral law.

But, my friends, pause for a moment. After all, that would only be a skeleton. After all, simply to draw the outlines of a picture is not the work of an artist. Suppose you ask a master in music, "How am I to produce the real result of stately sound?" He will tell you about the common chord; he will tell you about the results of its changes and its affinities, and will speak of those results as harmony; or he will tell you about the gamut of sounds—sounds found in the wind upon the mountains, found in the surging sea, found in the voice of childhood, found in the whisper of your dreams—sound that is everywhere, sound that wanders up and down this wild, wild universe. He will tell you all that; and explain how in proper steps, in wise modulations, that is melody, as the union of sounds is harmony. Is that enough? Would

that produce "The Last Judgment" [illegible] in tears? Would that produce the chorus of Handel that made you almost rise and march in majesty? Would that fill you with deep thoughts in Beethoven, or fire you into joy in Mendelssohn? Oh, no! You have your skeleton, but you have not one thing, the deepest; genius has to touch with its fire the fact that is before you; you want the mystery of life. And then suppose you turn to an artist and ask him to guide you in painting, and he [illegible] shadow, about the laying on of color, about the drawing of lines, about the exact expression of the distant and the present, of the foreground and the background, and having learned it all you produce what seems an abortion; you ask yourself, "What is the meaning of this?" Is this enough to make you quiver, in Dresden, before the San Sisto, carried away by those Divine eyes of the Mother of Eternity, or rent with sorrow before the solemn [illegible] to fill you with tears of delight when you enter the Sistine Chapel, and see St. John as he kneels with his unshed tears about the dead Christ? What is there wanting in the touch of your artist? There is wanting genius; there is wanting life. Or, to take one instance more. You ask somebody to teach you sculpture, to tell you how to make yourself master in the treatment of stone. He will tell you wise things about the plastic material that you have to mold with thumb and finger, and then about the use of the chisel and the hammer to produce the result in the stone, following the treatment of that plastic material. But when you have learned it all, can you really believe that you will produce the effect of that majestic manhood that you see in the David of Angelo in the Piazza of Florence, or that wise, determined progress that is expressed in Donatello's St. George? What is the difference between your failure and the results of those men? Genius—life. And when you turn to the moral law, and when you ask yourself, "How can I learn to be athirst for God," the preachers say, "Accept the moral law; act exactly in distinct duty to your parents; say, 'Corban, it is a gift by whatsoever thou mayest be profited thereby'; do your duty strictly to the letter and nothing more; be conservative about your property; restrain yourself from a desire to change; do not stimulate and do not

satisfy your passions beyond what is exactly expressed in the moral law." But then, if you speak the truth, you say, "And in the end, what am I? Why, after all, most commonplace, and, in truth, most sinful." What is the difference? This difference; there wants not here the touch of genius; there wants the touch of life Divine, grace that illuminates the moral law; there wants, my friends, the enthusiasm for [illegible], the science of sciences, the art of arts, the delight and the desire of doing right because it is right, the great and splendid spirit that belongs to all of us; and yet it is the highest when the thirst of your soul is real. Certainly it is to know God's guidance in law; but what is law? It is to grasp that atmosphere of life and reality which comes out of the moral law to those who seek it in a living person first—the desire of goodness, the desire, the love, the enthusiasm, the ambition, cost what it may, of doing right because it is right. Oh, my friends, I submit, and I submit it without fear of contradiction, that is an ambition worthy of Englishmen. Certainly we are not dreamers; certainly God has given us practical activity; certainly, whatever we misunderstand, this we can understand, the thirst of the soul for God is the thirst to love goodness because it is right.

And then hastily to conclude, lest I should strain your patience—although, perhaps, I may need no apology, having one opportunity here and no more—I would say that that thirst is expressed, that that thirst is satisfied, not only in moral law and in its atmosphere, but in one utterance above [illegible] we can all understand. When we read the New Testament, so simple, so straightforward, so true, so beautiful, with some difficulties but no difficulties that a true art can find insuperable—when we read the New Testament we are brought face to face with the teachings of Christ. And there is this, my friends, more about these teachings—that if you are to follow them out you have not time enough in time; the teachings of our Master demand eternity—there is something about them [illegible] so simple, so beautiful and yet we feel that we are insufficient to fulfill them in this sphere of time. If my soul is [illegible] it is unfit for the fulfillment of those great splendid practical teachings which remind me that I am to begin to learn my lesson in the morning clearly, but that I shall fulfill my achievement in the great land beyond the grave. Is that enough? No; no, when the heart is

lonely; no, when the sun is setting; no, when the clouds are gathering around us; no, when the storm is coming up. It is useless for the preacher, if he tries to be real, to talk about law, or the splendor of teaching; if we know the human heart in its width and its activity, if it is to find satisfaction it must find it in a personal life. You may say that you can not know God. That is the ordinary answer of the human sinning heart, which in modern times calls itself agnostic. Know God! Well, of course, it is truly said that it is by mere license of speech when you talk of knowledge about human perceptions—it is wisely said. You perceive a fact, my friend; you must perceive it in itself, and as it is, and by an intellect that can infallibly state that it is so and in that manner. Knowledge like that is impossible, I grant; but between that scientific knowledge and utter unbelief there are shades, first of all of assent that shuts out doubt, and at last, at the other pole, of a doubt that almost shuts out assent. Between the two there are activities of life, and if you are to say, "I can not know the personal God, with scientific knowledge, I grant it;" but you can not know any thing, naturally in theology [illegible] duct, or conduct that is not moral—you can know nothing, you can never act at all, because all our action is not on knowledge, but on belief, and therefore when we turn to a personal life that is not perceived by the activity of the senses, we only demand that you are to accept that which it is possible to accept in any sphere of activity, and which you do accept. It is possible for you according to the laws of your being to accept a personal Christ. "But," you say—and I must remind you of it as I close—"a personal Christ, but still not clothed in human lineaments, a personal Christ who is mysterious—how can you accept that?" How can you not? My friends, the human intellect is so framed that it acts habitually upon ideas that are true yet indistinct. You act on space, you act on time, you have infinity, you have in your mouth the word "cause." What do you know exactly about infinity, or space, or time, or cause? The human intellect, it is truly said, first by the greatest of the fathers, then repeated by modern thinkers—the human intellect is so great, first that it can take exact ideas, then, because it is infinite, that it can act instantly upon ideas that are real ideas but indistinct. Christ—yes, first He is indistinct, yet most real—real because He

entered into history, real because He expressed the idea that is in the brain and heart of us all; indistinct because these little twenty centuries have separated us from His actual historic life; but a fact to those who seek Him, because His power is to make Himself an inward gift to the human soul, because His activity is such that He meets us on the altar of His sacred sacrament, that He meets us in the Divine word to express His thoughts, that He meets us in consolation, that He meets us in absolution, in moments of sorrow and of prayer. Oh, you are not driven to a distant infinity! Oh, you are not asked to rest upon a shadow! Oh, you are not besought to play the dreamer, or the sentimentalist, when you think about God! Oh, you are asked to remember that fair, sweet vision—the vision of a Man so devoid of vulgarity, that whilst He loved the people He did not despise the great—the vision of a Man so strong that He could face a multitude, so tender that He could raise the lost woman, so gentle that the little children gathered their arms about His neck; the vision of a Man at home with fishermen, and at home with the high born, with thoughts so deep that they permeate modern Christendom, with thoughts so simple that they taught truth to ancient Galilee; the vision of a man who encouraged youth, the One on whom we rest, by whom we hang, in whom we hope, who sympathizes with all our best desires, who does not denounce us, but only intercedes and pities; the man who never places Himself upon a Pharisaic pedestal, but feels with the child, with the boy, with the man, with the woman,—the Man of men, the crown of our humanity, the God in Man, the Man in God, the power of the sacraments, the force of prayer, the sweet, dear Friend, who never misunderstands us, never forsakes us, never is hard upon us. My friends, it is your privilege, it is mine, beyond the privilege of the Pharisees, to know in the Gospel, to know in the Church, Christ God expressed in humanity. Is your soul athirst for the highest? You may find it if you come in repentance, if you come in desire, if you come in quiet determination to do your duty, you may find it satisfied—yes, now satisfied—in Christ.

And that, I take it, is the object of your church—to help this dear, great work in London in the home of toil and excitement and sorrow; to help these brave strong men, our brothers, in the midst of their toil and dust of life, to throw themselves into such sacred shadows and to

remember the sunlight of eternity, to find their satisfaction in Christ. Therefore I congratulate you upon the reopening of your church. Therefore I remind you that to do that is to furnish men with a power, a spiritual power, which will enable them to appreciate the evidences of Christianity; to furnish men with a spiritual hope that will enable them to stand against the difficulties of life; to furnish men with spiritual power that will be by them—I speak that I know, not in theory, but from experience—which will be by them in those last solemn and dreadful moments when the intoxication of the senses and the voice of the crowd, and the delirium of desire, and the power of passion are attenuated into the consistence of a dream, and when above they are standing face to face with the eternal—a power that will help them at such moments to be strong and brave men—the power of God's presence. Do you thirst for God? Are you putting something between your thirst and God's satisfaction? My brothers and sisters, give up your sin: put it down. You can not in a moment; it will need struggle and determination and strength of purpose, with sad moments and trial: but there is Christ, there is Christ and God; and if you fight it like brave men, if you live the life of the Church to-day—I can not forget it—if you live the life of the saints—for that was the secret of their sanctity—then indeed for you and me, I most sincerely believe it, we shall be among those who come to Zion, with songs upon our heads, to that bright moment when thirst is satisfied, when sorrow is ended, when doubt is concluded, when sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Live for that moment, and you may satisfy your thirst with God, with God in Christ.

THE RESURRECTION.

BY THE REV. CANON LIDDON.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday Afternoon, April 5, 1885.

"That I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection.—PHILIPPIANS iii. 10.

"THE power" of Christ's resurrection here is one of those phrases which is only understood when we remember that it is in tacit contrast with another phrase which suggests it—power seems here to be in contrast with fact. In every occurrence, great or unimportant, there are to be considered, first, the fact—the actual reality or cause—and, secondly, the consequences, actual or possible—what St. Paul calls "the power" of the fact. We know the fact of an occurrence when we have handled the proofs which show that it really took place; when we know how it has been described, what witnesses [illegible], near or distant, from without or from within; we know the fact when we have mastered its scene, its mechanism, its dimensions; but we know of the "power" of the fact, or occurrence, when we can trace what its effects have been; what but for disturbing or unconceived of causes they might have been or might be—whether in the world at large or upon individuals, whether upon others or upon [illegible]. [illegible] to ascertain a fact than to take the measure of its consequences, its practical meaning, its power. If I throw a stone as far as I can, I can ascertain, without much difficulty, the weight of the stone, the moment at which it leaves my hand, the distance of the spot at which it touches the ground from the spot on which I am standing. So much for the fact. But what is hard to ascertain is the effect of the stone's passage through the air; the thousands or millions of insects instantaneously disabled or destroyed by it; the radiation of disturbance caused by the displacement of the atmosphere, and extending, it may be, into [illegible] altogether my calculations. We all of us understand more or less, at least, the gen-

eral outline of the succession of recent events in Egypt; but what will be, in the course of time, their import and influence upon the condition and history of our own country and of the world, who shall say? This is a matter much less easy to determine—it needs the lapse of time: it needs observation, reflection, very varied experience, in order to do so with any approach to accuracy. On Good Friday morning we were all of us startled by hearing that a great lawyer and statesman had passed away; and it is not necessary to subscribe to all of Lord Cairns' opinions in order to do justice to his consummate ability, or to the fearless conscientiousness which throughout marked his career. But what will be the effect, or, as St. Paul would say, the "power," of the withdrawal of so prominent a figure from the public life of this country, and at such a time as the present? This question, also, can only be answered some months—perhaps some years—hence; and even then the influence of a single mind upon those with whom its possessor acted and upon men in general, is not easy to measure with any thing like exactness. You see, my brethren, to apprehend a fact is one thing: it is quite another to understand its power. When, then, St. Paul utters his earnest prayer that he may know "the power" of Christ's resurrection, he implies that already he has knowledge of the fact. He had, indeed, no sort of doubt about it. Here, perhaps, some of you may recall ground over which at this sacred season we have travelled together in former years—I mean the nature and the vigor of the witness which St. Paul in particular bears to the fact of the resurrection, and by which, accordingly, he unveiled before our eyes the basis of his own strong conviction. St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians before any one of the Gospels had yet been written, and that Epistle is one of the four books in the New Testament against the genuineness and authenticity of which unbelieving criticism has found absolutely nothing to allege—there is, in fact, in the most purely skeptical judgment no more reason for doubting that St. Paul wrote that epistle than for doubting that Sir Walter Scott wrote "Waverly." And what does St. Paul tell the Corinthians about our Lord's resurrection? He tells them that while he was writing there were more than two hundred and fifty persons still living, who had seen our risen Lord on one occasion in Palestine. "He was seen of five hundred brethren at once, of whom

the greater part remain until this present." Now, here was an assertion which the Corinthians might, if they would, verify for themselves. There was intercourse enough in those days between Greece and the coast of Syria, and any Corinthian who thought that St. Paul was too impetuous or too credulous, or any thing else of the kind, had only to investigate the accuracy of his statement by paying a visit to some of the two hundred and fifty survivors, and question them for himself. St. Paul's statement was in itself a challenge to do so; and it, as far as we know, the challenge was not accepted, that will only have been because men felt that unless the apostle had been quite sure of his ground the statement would never have been made. Even those who do not, with the Church of God, perceive in St. Paul a glorious saint and apostle, enthroned, now that his life of toil and suffering is over, not far from the throne of Himself in heaven—even they must, and do gather from his writings that he was a remarkably clever man—a man of shrewd common sense; and as such, putting for a moment his inspiration aside, he never, we may be sure, would have made an assertion like that before us had he believed it to be liable to be disputed upon examination, had he been less than certain of its literal and severe accuracy. St. Paul was writing at a time when Christianity had risen for other reasons, as we know, but also for this—that more than two hundred and fifty people were still living who, if they were questioned, would say that they had seen him; and St. Paul, being thus sure of the resurrection as a fact, was not embarrassed by an *a priori* doctrine forbidding him to ignore it. He was not like the cold Schoolmen whom Lord Bacon condemned, and who, instead of learning what to think about Nature from the facts of Nature, endeavored to persuade themselves that the facts of Nature corresponded somehow with what they already thought about it. If a man say that miracle is impossible or incredible no amount of proof that the resurrection actually occurred is likely to satisfy him. When some early navigators, of whom Herodotus tells us, coasted round Africa and returned with the story that they had reached a region at which their shadows at noon-day pointed towards the south, their report was treated as incredible by the inhabitants of the Mediterranean seaboard, whose own constant but narrow experience furnished them, as they thought, with ample reasons for thinking that nothing of the sort was possible.

When asserting the fact of the resurrection, St. Paul planted his foot upon the rock of experience, and he was proof against the seductions, whether of the idols of the den or the idols of the cave, in the air around him. He had no need to pray, as have many in our time, that he might be assured of the fact of Christ's resurrection; what he did pray for was that he might increasingly understand its "power."

Now, we may be sure that we can trace only very partially the range of power which attaches to such an event as the resurrection of our Lord; but let us do what we may within such very narrow spheres as the thought and life of man. The "power" of Christ's resurrection, then, may be observed first of all, and generally in the way in which a true belief in it enables a man to realize habitually the moral government of the world by God. Our age has many characteristics which honorably distinguish it from earlier times, and which will be pointed to hereafter by historians; but it is not an age in which men believe, as they believed in the past, that whatever happens or is permitted, all is overruled by a Being who is perfectly good and perfectly wise. Where people are not deliberately and consciously skeptical about this they often believe it only in languid, hesitating way, they feel the doubt which floats in the intellectual air around them, and which enervates their mental grasp of truth. We may, perhaps, flatter ourselves that this weakened hold on an elementary truth of Theism is the result of a wider mental culture than was enjoyed by our fathers, of a greater readiness to welcome new impressions, of a more judicial and balanced habit of mind. In this manner disbelief in an overruling Providence may assume in our eyes the colors of a distinction, almost of a virtue; and it is only when we find ourselves at one of the sterner crises in life, and the heaven above our heads seems as brass, and we cry, and there is, as we think, none to answer, that we understand the extent and the misery of our loss. And when some man who is not a clergyman appears on the scene of our public life; a man to whom the Divine government of the world is as certain and as obvious as the action and the language of his friends or of the members of his family; a man to whom prayer is the most natural form of conversation, and the Bible and the imitation of Christ the rule of his conduct, we experience almost a new sensation, as if the possibility of a [illegible] opposition; and

yet, if we knew more of the days that have preceded us, we should know full well that the type which for the moment, and so justifiably, fascinates [illegible] the prevailing type among the servants of Jesus Christ [illegible] circumstances, no doubt, in the modern world which make it [illegible] in the Divine government harder than it was for our ancestors. One such circumstance is our wider outlook. Thanks to the press, to the railway, to the telegraph, we know a great deal more of what is going on all over the world at the same time than did any previous generation of men; and one consequence is this, that human life presents itself to many minds, as a much more tangled and inexplicable thing than it ever did before; the picture which is brought before us is so complex and so blurred; the details so much more [illegible] the only governing and ruling principle; the disappointments in store for the conscience which is eagerly searching for a law of right vigorously asserting itself are so frequent and so great, that men lose heart where heart and purpose are especially needful, and they [illegible] in some indistinct conception of the world which treats it as an unexplored and inexplicable moral chaos, amid the confusions of which it is vain to look for any clear sign of a reign of righteousness behind the veil. Now, here the certainty that Jesus Christ rose from the dead asserts what St. Paul calls its "power." For, when Jesus Christ was crucified, it might have seemed—it did seem—that the Sun of God's righteousness had gone down behind thick clouds, and that a moral darkness, of which that in the sky was but a shadow, had settled upon the earth; it might have seemed that while all the vices were being [illegible] all the virtues could be crucified, and crucified with impunity, in Jerusalem; it might have seemed that we lived in a world where nothing was more surely at a discount than moral beauty, nothing more certain to prevail than physical and brute force. But when He burst forth from the grave in which they had laid him under the seal of the stone, He proclaimed to men's senses, as well as to their consciences, that the rule of law which rules the world is moral and not material law, and that the Sun of God's righteousness, if it is at times overclouded in human history, is sure to reappear. To know that Jesus Christ rose from the dead is to know that, whatever may be the perplexities of the moment or of the age, the

world is really governed by God's most holy and overruling Providence.

And, next, the "power" of the resurrection of Christ is seen in the firm persuasion which it should create in our own days, as in the days of the apostle, that the Christian creed is true—true as a whole, true in its several constituted parts. Thus the resurrection of Christ has a two-fold aspect; it is at once a truth of the Christian creed, and it is a proof that the Christian creed is true. There are many truths of Christianity which do not contribute any thing to prove its general truth, although they could not be denied or lost sight of without really impairing its integrity. Take, for example, the truth of our Lord's perpetual intercession in heaven. Nothing tells more powerfully upon the life and conscience of a believing Christian than the [illegible] but unseen Saviour is ever engaged in one ceaseless act of self-oblation on high on behalf of His members and servants here on earth, on behalf of all and each of them: "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." But this truth does not attest the truth of any portion of the creed, although it is, if we may say so, the inevitable complement of other truths. We believe in our Lord's intercession because His apostles have so taught us; we do not believe in the creed as a whole, because we believe in Christ's intercession. It is otherwise with the resurrection, which is, as I have said, not only an article of the Christian faith, but a proof that the Christian faith is true. It is this because it is the certificate of our Lord's mission from heaven, to which He Himself appealed as the warrant of His claims. He laid stress on His coming resurrection on two occasions—especially in His saying about the destruction and the re-building of the Temple, and in His saying about "the sign of the prophet Jonas." His words came, in effect, to this: "You Jews doubt whether I have any right to teach you and to proclaim Myself as I do. Very well. Wait a short time and an event will take place which will prove that your misgivings or your doubts are unwarranted. I shall be put to death, I shall rise again from the dead on the third day, and this will be the countersign of My mission from heaven. If it does not take place, reject Me." It is a mistake to say that our Lord referred to His resurrection only on rare occasions, and that it had no such place in His own mind or in the teaching of His apostles; for it [illegible]

the Gospels, that He was, as would be natural, constantly dwelling on it. Thus He alluded to it—at least, by implication—in the synagogue of Capernaum, when He spoke of the Son of Man going up "where He was before." He foretold both His death and resurrection explicitly after the confession of His divinity by Simon Peter at Cæsarea Phillippi; while coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration He bade the disciples who had been with Him tell no man what they had seen until the Son of Man was risen from the dead; after healing the demoniac He is crossing Galilee, and He explains to His disciples that He will be delivered into the hands of men, that they will kill Him, that the third day He will rise. Still more striking is His saying that in dying He will not submit to the irresistible; that no man takes His life from Him; that He has power to lay it down and power to take it again. In going up to Jerusalem He repeats the prediction about dying and rising with great detail and precision, and in the upper chamber the gracious promise, "A little while, and ye shall see Me," certainly points to the resurrection. Even on the road to Gethsemane, when the little company had sung the hymn and left the upper chamber, He assures them, "After that I am risen from the dead I will go before you into Galilee." The resurrection, then, was constantly before His mind, and it was so because it was to be the warrant of His mission; and when He did rise He redeemed the pledge which He had given to His disciples and to the world. The first preachers of Christianity, at any rate, understood this. The resurrection was the proof to which they constantly pointed that our Lord really was what He claimed to be. "Jesus and the resurrection" was the popular name at Athens for the Gospel as it was taught by St. Paul. "This Jesus whom ye have crucified hath God raised up" had been the key-note to the early teaching of St. Peter. The resurrection was the truth which filled the earliest Church with converts: the resurrection was the decisive proof that Christianity was from God.

Now, let us ask more precisely what is the true value of the fact that our Lord rose from the dead among the credentials of Christianity? what is the measure of its evidential power? Here, it would seem, there are two opposite mistakes to be avoided. There is the mistake which was made nearly a century ago by a writer of genius, who was, however,

unduly influenced by the wish to simplify questions which are not really simple—I mean Archdeacon Paley. Paley wanted to put the evidence of the truth of Christianity, as the phrase goes, in a nutshell; and in his well known "Evidences" he makes the whole case of Christianity rest upon the fact that the resurrection was so certain to the first preachers of the Gospel that they willingly gave their lives to attest it. Paley's mistake lay not in insisting on this fact—which is, indeed, of the very first importance as an evidence of Christianity—but in insisting on it as if it stood alone, and would of itself and unsupported prove to all minds the truth of the Christian creed. The consequence has been that in many minds of our own, and of a preceding, generation Paley's book, in so many ways admirable, has failed to create or re-enforce the convictions which its author designed it to serve—it has been felt that more stress has been laid on a single line of evidence than it will properly bear, the truth being that the evidences of Christianity are not one and simple, but many and complex. Their strength lies in their convergence; and the conviction of the truth of the resurrection, which was held by the apostles, is only one of several lines of argument which point toward [illegible], beyond question, the most important; and when this is overlooked there is always risk of an intellectual catastrophe. The fabric which its Divine Architect meant to rest upon a group of pillars can not be safely rested, even by a man of genius, upon one. And the other mistake is of later date, and it is much more serious. From saying that the resurrection alone proves Christianity to be true men have, in some instances, come of late to say that it is of no value whatever as an evidence of Christianity—Christianity is said to be recommended solely by the moral character of Christ; the supernatural incidents of His earthly life, and notably His [illegible], are treated as an embarrassing addition to what else would be a simple and convincing exhibition of moral excellence. "We believe the resurrection," men say, "if we do believe it, for the sake of the religion which seems to warrant it. We do not believe in Christianity for the sake of the resurrection." Now, enough has been already said to show that this estimate of the evidential value of the resurrection is altogether opposed to the mind of our Lord and His apostles. They did not mean the resurrection to stand alone; but

they assigned to it a high—nay, the highest place among the facts and considerations which go to show that Christianity is true. The real value of the resurrection as an evidence of Christianity would seem to be that it is a countersign in the world of Nature to the teaching of our Lord in the court of conscience—the outward miracle assures us through the senses that the Being who is the Author of Nature is the same Being as He who speaks to conscience in the moral law, in the Beatitudes, in the Sermon on the Mount, in the last discourse, in the whole character and teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we heard the inward voice of conscience alone we might doubt whether there was really any thing external to ourselves which warranted it; if we witnessed the outward miracle alone we might see in it a mere wonder with no moral consequence—it would have no ascertainable relation to the inward and the spiritual; but when the teacher whose voice pierces, rouses, quickens the conscience is accredited by an interference with, or a suspension of, the observed course of Nature, the combined evidence is in reason overwhelming, deep answers to deep, sphere answers to sphere, the moral and the material are in felt harmony, and the combination is more than sufficient to warrant that supreme assent of the mind and heart which we call faith. In this way a persuasion of the literal certainty of the resurrection is at this hour, as of old, a power which has weight with the most well-informed and thoughtful minds as decisively attesting the claims of Christianity.

And, lastly, the "power" of the resurrection should be traced and felt in the spiritual and moral life of Christians. Let us remind ourselves that our Lord Jesus Christ is not merely an authoritative teacher, not merely our redeemer from sin and death, but also, and especially through real union with us, the author of a new life within us—He gives us a new nature, which is, indeed, His own. St. Paul teaches us this again and again, and by a great variety of expression. Sometimes he speaks of our Lord as though He were a sphere of being within which the Christian lives: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." And sometimes he speaks of Him as of an inhabitant of the soul: "Christ in you," he says to the Colossians; "the hope of glory." And the union is not the language of metaphor in St. Paul's mouth; it is to him just as real a thing as eating, or walking, or reading, or preaching, or going to Athens,

or going to Jerusalem; it is an actual experience of which he is certain. It began with him when he was baptized by Ananias, for, as he says, "As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;" and it will be deepened and strengthened in many a way, but especially by the reception of that other holy sacrament in which, unlike the careless Corinthians, he did discern the Lord's body, and knew that he was admitted to the closest contact with the very source of life. Let none think that in insisting on the presence of Christ in the bodies and souls of Christians we are for a moment obscuring the office of the Holy Spirit, or confusing the work of the Spirit with the work of the Son. The office of the Spirit is to convey Christ's nature and power to and in His members. This is one of the reasons for His being called so constantly in the New Testament the Spirit of Christ. "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you," was our Lord's description of His office; and thus He is the agent who makes the Christian sacraments effectual to the conveying of Christ's human nature to Christians. The baptized puts on Christ; but he is "born of water and of the Spirit." The communicant eats the body and drinks the blood of Christ; but it is the Spirit that quickeneth the dead elements, and makes them the vessels and vehicles of the unseen gift. Our Lord, then, dwells in Christians; their bodies and souls are temples of His person; His incarnation is perpetuated in His living Church; and, as a consequence, the New Testament teaches us that the mysteries of His earthly life are reproduced, after a manner, in the Christian soul. If Christ is born supernaturally of a virgin mother, the Christian is made God's child by adoption and grace —the apostles are in travail until Christ be formed in their converts. If Christ is crucified on Mount Calvary, the Christian, too, has a Calvary where he is crucified with Christ, where he crucifies "the flesh, with the affections and lusts." If Christ, who was buried, is taken up into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Christian in heart and mind with Him ascends, with Him continually dwells, as St. Paul says, is made to sit together with Him in heavenly places. And, in like manner, if Christ rose from the dead the third day, according to the Scriptures, the Christian also has experience of an inward resurrection. As at a primitive baptism the candidate was plunged beneath the waters, and then was lifted up amid a chorus of prayer and benedictions, so Christians are in that initial sacrament buried with Christ and raised

again to newness of life; and if the baptismal gift should be impaired or forfeited a second putting forth of the resurrection power becomes necessary—a resurrection in penitence, a new effort of the power of recovery from sin and death issuing from contact with the risen and ever-living Redeemer. All this seems to be the language of metaphor, or the language of mysticism, until it has been discovered to be the record of an actual experience. St. Paul knew that it meant for him, that it might mean for others, a solemn reality. It was this inward power of Christ's resurrection in its ever-increasing fullness that he chiefly desired to know. And of this power of Christ's resurrection, of this moral and spiritual resurrection which issues from, and corresponds with, the resurrection of Christ from the grave, there are three leading characteristics. Our Lord rose really. It was not a phantom that haunted the upper chamber on the road to Emmaus or the shore on the sea of Galilee, as the apostles who had to handle Him could see; for a phantom had no such flesh and bones as they might see He had. And our Easter resurrection from sin should be no less real; it will be no less real if the power by which we arise is the flesh and bones, the actual substance, of renewed life. True prayers, true confessions of sin, true revelations, truth in thought, and word, and act—these are indispensable. To have the name that we live again, and yet to be dead, is only too easy; it is scarcely less easy to impose upon ourselves than upon others with the phantom of life. Little, indeed, will a phantom resurrection avail us here or hereafter. Let us pray for that first mark of Christ's resurrection power—reality. And our Lord, as He really rose, so he rose to lead, for the most part, a hidden life. On the day of His resurrection He appeared five times, but rarely afterward during the forty days that preceded the ascension. So it is with the risen life of the soul. It is not constantly displayed before the eyes of men; it seeks retirement and sincerity, which retirement insures. Those whose religious life is perpetually displayed to the public eye may have really risen; but they are, at best, unlike our risen Lord: "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also disappear with Him in glory." Excessive speaking about ourselves may make heavy demands upon loyal and impetuous natures; frequent retirement for communion

with God is not natural to flesh and blood; it is wanting in the demand for excitement and human sympathy which enters so largely into much of our modern religion; but let us be sure that it is a true note of the presence of Christ's resurrection power that we should be thankful to be often alone with God.

And, once more—our Lord, "being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." His resurrection power does not lend itself to the perpetual alternations of relapse and recovery, which mark the lives of so many Christians; "being raised from the dead He dieth no more." It is sad work when Easter is only reached to forfeit by relaxation what little may have been gained in Lent and Passiontide. We may fall into the grave of sin once too often. Surely we should pray, with the ancient Church of Christ—

> O Jesu! from the death of sin,
> Keep us, we pray. So shalt Thou be
> The everlasting Paschal joy
> Of all the souls new-born to Thee.

God grant to all of us that St. Paul's desire may be fulfilled alike in our convictions and in our lives, and that we may know something of the power of Christ's resurrection as it really is. As the years go by our natural forces become sensibly weaker—they will fail altogether at the approach of death; but here is a power which death can not distinguish or arrest, since it is itself the conquest and reversion of death—a power which may enable the weakest of us to feel that while his bodily strength decays he is enriched and invigorated with a new energy that comes from heaven.

FORTITUDE.

BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, Nov. 16, 1884.

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with his sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—HEBREWS xii. 7.

I TRIED last Sunday to set forth the counsel and consolation of God in Scripture to a form of sorrow entirely unknown to vulgar and self-satisfied souls, but very familiar to even the noblest of God's children—the feeling of weariness and despondency, the sadness of apparent failure in life's appointed work, the sense that we have "wrought no deliverance on the earth," and that we are not better than our fathers. I tried to bring home to all who are thus heavy laden that we have to work and to leave the issue of our work with God; that we should try to do our duty and not to be troubled about its results; that for good deeds there is no such thing as real or final failure; that even as regards earth, the cross of Christ is our pledge; that what we take for utter failure may, in God's sight, be eternal victory. For that cross is a sign to us that even Christ's work seemed to fail; thirty years of obscurity, one bright year of Galilean ministry, one year of gathering and deepening opposition, one year of excommunication and imperiled flight among the heathen and in obscure hiding places; only twelve apostles, and one of them a traitor; to be called a demoniac, a Samaritan, and a deceiver; rejection in Galilee, rejection in Samaria, rejection in Judæa, rejection by the mob and the multitude, rejection by Pharisees and the religious classes, rejection by Sadducees and worldlings, rejection by Herod and the princes, rejection by Caiaphas and the priesthood, rejection by Pilate and the government; then the agony and the passion, the mocking and scourging and smiting and spitting, the false witness, the crown of thorns, the bitter cross between two thieves, the desertion by His own, the hiding—the seeming hiding—of His Father's countenance—that was

the life of Christ. And yet that life of Christ was the salvation of the world, and that cross of Christ is, as I said, the symbol of man's loftiest consolation and of man's eternal hope.

Now, from the sinlessness of Christ's Divine humanity it was impossible that the Son of God should be troubled by the clouded faith which is what we mean by despondency. Such despair, though even the noblest of mankind—even a Moses, even an Elijah, even a Paul—are not exempt from it, is yet a sign of human infirmity. But if He was exempt from every sorrow which has the least tinge of personal weakness, there was hardly another of life's many trials [illegible] did not bear, and, by bearing, lighten and brighten for us. His own good servants. He was "not a High Priest who could not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was [illegible] yet without sin;" and this was why He could feel compassion for us, and could cry, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

"All ye that are weary and heavy laden." Would that appeal have touched, as it has touched, the hearts of mankind if the weary and heavy laden were but few in number? Is there one of us who has passed the happy days of childhood and has not known [illegible] numberless form of human anguish? Might [illegible] man whatever whom you picked out of this congregation that—

> The bounding pulse, the languid limb,
> The changing spirits rise and fall;
> We know that these were felt by Him,
> For these are felt by all?

"We are born," said the unfortunate Montezuma—"let that come which must come." And what is that but what St. Paul wrote to Timothy, "No man should be moved by these afflictions, knowing that we are appointed thereunto?" It is a part of the necessary discipline of the Divine training of life. God never afflicts us willingly, but only because such afflictions are indispensable in a thousand ways to our moral and spiritual being. And the manner in which we bear our sorrows is one of the tests of our faith in God. For these bitter arrows come from a gentle hand; and if some of us suffer the wounds which they inflict to rankle even to the death, there are others who thank God even

for those wounds. David was perplexed because he saw the wicked in such prosperity—"They flourish like a green bay-tree." "They come into no misfortune like other folk, neither are they plagued like other men. And this is the cause, that they are so holden with pride, and overwhelmed with cruelty." But God's treasures must be purified even in the furnace. The cherubim whose wings overshadowed in the Sanctuary the Ark of God could only be of the finest beaten gold, such as can be wrought and tortured and fretted into most exquisite workmanship. "It is good for a man that he bear a yoke in his youth. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." It is among the quiet uncomplaining women who have suffered all their lives long from sickness or from heavy trouble that we find the purest, the sweetest, the loveliest of human souls.

But if God sends us sorrow He also gives us the power of robbing sorrow of half its anguish, for all its bitterness. How different, for instance, is the incidence of trial to weak, complaining men who are thrown into paroxysms of spleen at the slightest inconvenience, and to men of manly firmness who can bravely bear the heaviest misfortunes! The ancients reckoned that there were four cardinal virtues—justice, prudence, temperance and fortitude. "I am a man," said Frederick the Great, "therefore I fear to die; but to the rigor of destiny I oppose my own constancy, and, should I meet with shipwreck, I will breast the tempest, and drink, and live, and die as a king." Now, how completely did our beloved Lord set us the calm example of heroic constancy! Knowing all, looking down the dim, awful chasm, even to its utmost depths, He still set His face steadily to go to Jerusalem. "Master," said His disciples, "the Jews of late sought to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again!" Jesus answered, I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day." And how well His disciples learned the lesson! Then said Thomas unto his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Take the instance of ill health, physical pain, the life-long trial of some personal deformity. Some men are hopelessly crushed by such a trial; it becomes to them a clinging curse—not only the blight and effacement of their activity, but also the utter imbitterment of their whole souls; but there are others to whose character such a drawback seems to add a singular bloom of strength, of modesty and of sweetness. So was it that St. Paul bore his "thorn in the flesh."

which was speedily followed by a painful and disfiguring ophthalmia. Thrice he besought the Lord to take from him this "messenger of Satan" who buffeted him; but when God had once said, "My strength is sufficient for thee," he bore his burden like an indomitable man. There were men living in Edinburgh not many years ago who remembered to have seen in the streets of Edinburgh two little boys, each of whom was born with the life-long disaster of a clubbed foot. Each of those boys grew up to be a great man; but while the cheerful sweetness and simple nature of the one robbed the misfortune of all its sting, the other was soured by it into a pride and defiance which gave to all his life a morbid and miserable tinge. One of those lads was Sir Walter Scott; the other was Lord Byron.

The finest exhortation of the Latin poet—

> *Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito,*
> *Quam tua te fortuna sinet.*

"Yield not to evils, but go forward the more boldly whither thy fortune shall suffer thee"—what is it but the picture of a man, who, not corrupting the strength of heaven-descended will, triumphs over Fate, and Death, and Time? What is it but the determination, even if the worst befalls, to work the work of Him who sent us while it is day? "What mean ye," said St. Paul, "to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus." Of the man who thus nobly and resolutely faces every trial it may be truly said—

> He shall not dread misfortune's angry mein,
> Nor idly sink beneath her onset rude.

On Monday last, as you know, we held in this Abbey a funeral service for one who, by God's grace, set to the world in this respect an example conspicuous and noble. Henry Fawcett, a Cabinet Minister, who has just been laid in his grave among so many tears, had been blind for thirty years—from early manhood. He was out shooting with his father, when by some strange chance—which is the nickname we give to God's unseen providence—a shot entered the pupil of each eye, and from that moment he was totally blind. Now, under such an overwhelming calamity, as, indeed, under many forms of heavy trial, most men lead a maimed life of repining bitterness; but, young as he was, Henry Fawcett showed the world a noble example which will never be forgotten. By God's help he, from the very first, faced his catastrophe with a for-

titude which refused to succumb, and breasted undauntedly the blows of circumstance. He determined that he would still see with the inward eye of a brave heart and a pure soul. I stood next to him once a few years ago on a memorable occasion in the House of Lords; the man who accompanied him was pointing out every incident and every person exactly as he would have done to one who was not thus afflicted. "There," he said, "sits that Royal Prince, and yonder sits such and such a statesman conversing with so-and-so." To each remark Mr. Fawcett answered, "Yes, I see;" in point of fact he did see with the eyes of a serene and cheerful imagination. Manful and uncomplaining, he lived all his life as a man, and even as a man not blind. He walked with the same swinging stride; he fished in his native stream; he pulled stroke in the boat of his college; he skated for miles along the frozen river; he lectured as a University Professor; he rode fast in the streets of London; he addressed without a tremor, tumultuous meetings; he took an independent part as a politician; he displayed high administrative ability as a member of the Government. Blind, he never missed an opportunity of encouraging and helping the blind; and it was a touching proof of the love which he had won by his kindness and sympathy, even among those not so afflicted, that many even of the female clerks and telegraph boys, whose interests as postmaster-general he had always considered, sent flowers and wreaths to lay upon his bier.

Other blind men have shown similar fortitude. The great Church Father, Didymus of Alexandria, became blind at four years old, and St. Jerome calls him *videntum meum*—"my seer." The blind old Dondolo of Venice was the leader of the Fourth Crusade; and though ninety years of age he stood on the prow of his galley, and was the first man to leap ashore at the assault of Byzantium. The blind King of Bohemia had the bridle of his war-horse tied to those of two knights and rode into the thick of the fight to meet his doom at Crecy.

Ambrose Fisher, the blind scholar, as he is called, lies buried in our eastern cloister; and yonder is the bust of the immortal poet, who, like the Samson of which he sung,

> Though fall'n on evil days,
> On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues,
> In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
> And solitude,

yet with light denied him continued to do for God his day labor, and bated no jot of heart or hope, but still bore up and steered uphill ward.

Well, with all these that faced thus bravely one of the direst of human calamities the name of Henry Fawcett will be numbered, and he having thus served God in his generation has received his sight. Is not this high courage under trial one of the lessons of Him who went to meet His cross, and sought by example to teach every true Christian man that to shrink, and to whine, and to complain, and to fill the world with shivering egotism, and splenetic murmurs, and laundered moans, is the way of the coward, but that the virtue of the Christian is cheerful fortitude, and that it brings its own reward?

But there are other ills of life which leave us no undeveloped forces in reserve wherewith to meet them and which being utterly past remedy need submission rather than fortitude. Take the contingency of evil—I mean bereavement. Ah, friends, there is one dark shadow which may at any moment fall over all who have hearts to love—it is the shadow of Death! Have not nearly all of you suffered this anguish which comes to each in turn? Some of you have had wives whom you loved with all your hearts, and have had to cry,

> Take, hallowed earth, all that my soul holds dear.

Some of you remember the mothers whose pure, unselfish affection was such as can never unfold you again, and you have bent over a mother's grave. From some of you God has taken the children whom you dearly loved, your little boy or your little girl, your wee white rose of all the world; you have seen the damp sod laid over the little pale face and the dust strewn over the little golden head. Not a few men and women have suffered their lives to be utterly shattered by such a bereavement. They have not only gone mourning all their days, but have even been resentful against God. Has Scripture, my friends, no example for you? Have ye never read how, when David's little child was taken he rose and eat bread, and said, "Now that he is gone, why should I weep? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." You know how, when Aaron's two eldest sons were smitten of God in early manhood, Aaron held his peace. You know how, when the poor lady of Shunam came to Elisha and he asked, "Sister, is it well with

thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?" her boy lay dead in his little room, but for all her heart was breaking, she answered, "It is well." You know how when to Ezekiel the prophet God said, "Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down;" strong in God's strength, the prophet adds, "So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." And Christians have learned this lesson of holy resignation. Famous are the pathetic words of Edmund Burke on the death of his beloved, his only son—"The storm has gone over me, and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honors. I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth, and prostrate there I most unfeignedly recognize the Divine justice, and in some sense submit to it." And this week, [illegible] has added another memorial in this respect also to the Abbey, so fertile in the memory of great examples. On Thursday we placed in another transept the bust of Archibald Campbell Tait, the late Archbishop of Canterbury. You heard something about his work this morning. I will speak for one moment on one fact of his life. "God must love you very much," a friend once wrote to him, "[illegible]." He had taken from him [illegible] five sweet little children, dear to him as the apple of his eye; yet he bore up in the thought of Him who "shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." But this was not all. He had a son, a very dear son, a [illegible] son, full of [illegible] and high promise. In the prime of his days, in the fullness of his happy hope, that son was cut off. Then the partner of his work, the wife who shared all his trials, sank broken-hearted into the grave; but though he was old and so cruelly bereaved, and [illegible] his Master's service, [illegible], unfaltering, faithful, diligent, yes, even cheerful to the end, he followed his Master, bearing his cross. We, my friends, are not bidden as Ezekiel was, to suppress our sorrows or to check the play of our natural tears. God does not lay on us the hard commands of stoic apathy. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, so that they should "Behold how He loved him." But He teaches us not to sorrow as those that have no hope. He teaches us to sob forth amid our tears with poor Eli, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth to Him good," and with stricken

Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

But, once more, there is another aspect of affliction altogether different from this, and sterner; it is affliction coming as the natural result of misdoing, affliction not sent to perfect saints, but sent to punish sinners. Few, my brethren, indeed are the forms of human sorrow which are not traceable to human sin. Always when God sends us sorrow we should deeply consider its message; but the meaning becomes terribly emphatic when the waves of calamity are dashing against the waves of crime. Yet its message is most necessary and most merciful, for it is meant, then, to save us ere it be too late, to cut us short in a career of pride or wickedness. And that is why the punishment so often bears a hideous resemblance or analogy to the sin by which it has been caused. Sorrow is, then, nothing else but sin finding us out. How often does a man secretly recognize that it is no accident which has filled his bones with the sins of his youth, that shall lie down with him in the grave; how often does he know full well in his miserable heart that to his unlawful indulgences, to his drunkenness, to his forbidden passions, is due the poisoned blood which in various forms of disease or vice shall be the curse not only of himself, but of his innocent wife and of his children's children! Oh, that all men would see that even in these awful forms it is the goodness of God which is calling him to repentance! Thrice blessed he who can say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn Thy law; before I was troubled I went wrong, but now have I kept Thy statutes." And how will that man bless his trials who has suffered those trials to lead him to the throne of grace, who can date his knowledge of his Saviour and the recovery of his peace to some dread stroke of merciful calamity? Yes; such trials are full of mercy, and of many it might be said as the poet wrote of the haughty Cardinal:

> His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him;
> For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
> And found the blessedness of being little;
> And, to add greater honors to his age
> Than man could give him, he died fearing God.

What, then, my brethren, is the conclusion of the whole matter? It

is this. In this life affliction is part the common lot. We are born to suffer—to each his sufferings—

> All are compelled alike to groan,
> The tender for another's pain,
> The unfeeling for his own.

"In the world," said our Lord, "ye shall have tribulation; but," he added, "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. I have overcome the world, and, therefore, have overcome the sin with which it is rife, and the inevitable sorrow which that sin entails." He overcame the world that we might overcome it, too; therefore we are meant to face affliction with fortitude which may lessen it, with resignation which may humbly endure it, and, also, always with a repentance which, perhaps, here, and certainly hereafter, may make it needless for evermore. The very best of us all need repentance—yea, our very repentance needs to be repented of, our very tears want washing. But how much more is this true of those who have been ungodly, willful, willing, defiant sinners? Oh, if any of you are now living in high-handed iniquity, walking after your own heart's lust, adding for your own pleasure (it may be with calculating prudence) to the evils and miseries which you try to shield yourselves from, and letting the consequences of them fall on others, determining to enjoy what you covet, and thinking vainly to escape the consequences, forgetting that retribution is but sin at a later stage of its history, and that punishment is but sin taken a little lower down the stream, do not harden yourself in evil courses because you only now see that punishment is halted and has leaden feet, and have not yet experienced that it strikes with iron hand! And you, on the other hand, who, though you have wished to serve God, though you have determined that even if the world beset you, you will still be kind and true, and pure, are yet unfortunate, and, as it were, beaten in the world; surrounded by clouds in which you see no silver lining, for whom the present offers little encouragement, and the future not any hope—be not envious of evil doers, think not that God is dealing harshly with you if you see other men, guilty and careless, yet, apparently untroubled; prosperity is often sorry for unbelief, troubles being a sign of God's favor. The purple of Nero, the wealth of Herod, the banquet of Dives, the military pomp of Pilate—which were blessed?—these or the chains of Paul, the sores of Lazarus, the tears of the Magdalen, the

Cross of Christ? That is good for us—yea, and that is best for us—which makes us best, and that is not always by any means the world's sunshine. It is the fair day which brings forth the adder, and the prosperity of fools destroys them. Souls inherently vile and base, bristling in the sunshine of unmerited fortune, swell and glisten with the venom which success brings forth. Oh, let none of you forget that often God's worst punishment is not to punish! Punishment may be a proof that we are not yet reprobate, that we are not having our good things in this world, that the dreadful fiat has not yet gone forth, "Ephraim is turned unto idols; let him alone."

And therefore, brethren, in all your sorrows be comforted; bear them bravely, bear them meekly, look upon them as a sign not of God's wrath, but of His love, calling you unto Him. How will you thank God hereafter for those trials if they lead you nearer and bind you closer to Himself! Christ suffered for you that they might do so. Above all, when your trouble means deserved punishment, means necessary awakenment, means not only the chastisement of a son, but the chastisement of a rebellious and a prodigal and a wandering son, then you may gain from those trials nothing less than your salvation. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yokes, turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh." And then God adds immediately afterward, "Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore My heart is troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." Such has been in sorrow the merciful experience of many, as it was of the much afflicted poet:

> I was a stricken deer that left the herd
> Long since; with many an arrow deep infixed
> My panting side was charged; when I withdrew
> To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
> There was I found by One who had Himself
> Been hurt by archers. In His side He bore,
> And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
> With gentle force, soliciting the darts,
> He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.

RELATION OF CHRISTIANITY TO WAR.

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Preached in St. Lawrence Jewry, Sunday, March 22, 1885.

"Neither shall they learn war any more."—ISAIAH ii. 4. "As a good soldier of Jesus Christ."—2 TIMOTHY ii. 3.

It has been argued by a recent writer on theology that Christianity is not opposed to war. The world, as this writer says, is divided into nations as into families by the ordinance of God, and nations must fight for their rights, since there is no higher power to which their disputes can be referred. Thus war is supposed to be justified by its necessity. The religion of Christ does not interfere with it, for Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." It may proceed from bad or from good motives, and it should be considered that the more unjustifiable the motives are on one side the more justifiable they are on the other. Two Christian nations which are using the utmost ingenuity to destroy one another are both within the pale of the Catholic Church; nor is there the slightest break in their spiritual communion and fellowship at the very time when they are engaged in the work of mutual destruction. When the battle is over the religion of Christ resumes its active power. It has been in abeyance for a while; but the day after the battle, when the wounded are dying on the field, when the fever breaks out in the hospitals—then it shines forth with a fresh beauty and power, and men and women exert their best energies not to kill, but to save. I have endeavored to summarize the argument of the late Professor Moseley on the relation of Christianity to war. His conclusions have not met with very general acceptance, though, perhaps, they will help to make us think. We are afraid that in this, as in other matters, our principles may be brought down to our practice, instead of our practice being raised to some higher principle. The Lord said, "My kingdom is not

of this world;" but He did not mean by this that the doctrine of peace which He taught was not one day to leaven the world. Many evils have arisen from rash attempts to realize the ideal; but the ideal would be useless if it exercised no influence on the thoughts and actions of men. Nor would it be appropriate if a preacher of the Gospel on the eve of some great battle were to rush between the combatants with a Bible in his hands; nor patriotic in him if he disheartened his countrymen by proving to them out of Scripture [illegible] when they were engaged in war, that all war is contrary to the command of God. As a matter of fact there is as much of martial as of peaceful spirit in the pages of Scripture. We seem to be in a perpetual progress from a religion of war to a religion of peace. When we read, "Blessed is the Lord, that hath made my hands to war and my fingers to fight," we know very well that these are not the words of Christ. There is a well-known story that Ulphilas, the [illegible] who translated the Bible out of the Old German language, in the fourth century after Christ, omitted the portions of the Book which contained the wars of the Jews against the Canaanites, in the belief that they would do no good to his half-Christianized barbarians. And it must be admitted that the Christian religion has been the cause of more wars than it has prevented, and that these wars have been of a more cruel and exterminating sort than any which are recorded in Greek and Roman history; for the corruption of the best is the worst, and there is a compound of good and evil in the world which is more deadly [illegible] than evil itself. Still, however natural it may be to the state of man, and though Christianity as corrupted by man may have done but little to mitigate it, we can not admit that the religion of Christ, or the better mind of the world, is really insensible or indifferent to the guilt and misery of war. But they often seem powerless to prevent the evils which they condemn. The still small voice, "Blessed are the peacemakers," can not be heard amid the roar of the cannon and between the ranks of contending armies. It would not be the right time to think of such words. Nor is this to be attributed only to the wickedness of human nature, but also, in a great measure, to the force of circumstances. When Christ says to the individual, "Banish hatred and envy from all your thoughts," there is nothing to hinder our giving ear to His words, except what the Scripture calls "the hardness of your hearts." But the collective action of man-

kind is not equally free. When we say to nations, "Lay aside antipathies of race, forget the old feuds, cast out the mind diseased," we are asking them in a moment of time to make a change which can only be accomplished, if at all, by the education of centuries. The precept, "When a man smites thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also," is not applicable in such a case. Other words of Scripture seem more to the point: "Agree with thine adversary quickly whiles thou art in the way with him;" or the scornful words, "The children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle;" or the words of Christ Himself, "What king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassage, and desireth conditions of peace." Here are mottoes for diplomatists and statesmen, also for nations when, as has often been the case, in ignorance of their own resources, they are hurried into an unequal conflict.

The question has sometimes been asked whether wars will ever cease upon the earth. After a long peace men have been inclined to believe that war would never recur, and that a new reign of peace and happiness was to be inaugurated in the world. Such I remember to have been a prevailing feeling thirty or forty years ago. Not a cloud was to be seen on the horizon of the civilized world; and yet in a few hours, as we might say in a figure, the heaven was rent with storms. Perhaps the long peace has of itself a tendency to come to an end, when men have forgotten the horrors of war and are too apt to welcome its excitements; and therefore we can not say with confidence that in any given number of years war will cease upon the earth. The hope at that time was, at any rate, a premature one when there were so many evils to be redressed which could only be set right by force; so many limbs which required re-setting amidst the disproportion and dislocation of kingdoms. Looking at the question more generally we may note that, upon the whole, notwithstanding some appearances to the contrary, the course of the world is toward peace rather than war. Wars of conquest, wars arising out of the ambition of princes, wars of religion have almost disappeared; and commerce has been a great peacemaker, working through men's interests, which are apt to be more powerful than their principles.

though the passions of men not unfrequently get the better of these also. Neither would it be at all true to say that moral considerations are wholly left out of sight in the policy of nations. It is a well-worn remark that no one can preach immorality with [illegible] and, in a similar vein of reflection, it may be observed that no nation can defy justice in its dealings with another nation but sooner or later the world will rise up against it. On the other hand, the antipathies of nations, if they are not growing stronger, [illegible] and the facilities of locomotion, the [illegible] from one part of the world to another in our own day—[illegible] from China from Russia to the frontiers of India—renders the occasions of war more frequent and the points of contact more numerous than in former ages. Nor can any one who casts his eyes over the nations of Europe; who marks the jealousies and rivalries which spring up among them from day to day, like wild [illegible]; who sees the greatest military power in Europe on either side flanked by her natural enemies; who observes the helpless condition of the smaller States of Europe, lying at the mercy of their mighty neighbors, or the places at which the east and the west seem to touch—no one who considers all these things will seem very confident that, in spite of the efforts of statesmen, a great [illegible] even in our own day.

At present we are engaged in what may be termed one of a great nation's little wars; and our soldiers under another sun, shut up in a fortress, or marching through an endless desert, some of them wounded and wearied, are undergoing [illegible] are patient and hopeful. It seems natural that we who live in ease at home should sometimes give a thought to these. It does us good while pursuing our business or amusement, in the [illegible] of ordinary [illegible] in the height of the season, to remember that other men are suffering for us. It softens our hearts to picture the misery of life of our countrymen divided from us by two thousand miles. There are few persons here present who have not some connection, near or distant, with the expedition to the Soudan; who have not some friend, or relative, or acquaintance who is numbered among those noble soldiers; and there are well-known faces whom we may never see again.

With these feelings in our minds I think it may not be unsuitable for

us to consider once more a question which has been often discussed: the relation of Christianity, or I may say of morality, to war. What, if any, is the justification of it; and under what circumstances is it our duty to repel or even to attack an enemy? Is the life of the soldier to be regarded immoral? May there not also be virtues of the camp which hardly find an opportunity to grow elsewhere? There is something noble surely, above ordinary virtue, in a man laying down his life for his country or for his friends. In daily life the occasions are very rare indeed in which such a sacrifice is demanded of us. And this earthly warfare, which at first sight seems so much opposed to the teaching of Christ, may also be regarded as the most lively figure or type of that higher warfare which the Christian carries on against the world and against himself. We all of us deplore the evils of war. Nothing that can be said of them is exaggerated. We do not wish to extenuate or diminish the idea of them. The day after the battle, when the cannon are no more heard and the field is strewn with dead; the stillness of the night; the crowded pestilential hospital; the weeping and lamentation of the household, "Rachel weeping for her children, and will not be comforted because they are not"—these are the outward signs of the misery of war.

In time of peace, as was said of old, children bury their fathers; but in war fathers bury their children. The state of war has been sometimes said to be natural to man, and certainly ancient nations seem to have been more often at war than at peace. The Greeks, the Romans, the Jews, lived in an almost uninterrupted state of warfare; and probably any former condition of mankind, the Thirty Years' War, the last century, the first fifteen years of this, would in this respect appear intolerable to us; so great are the evils which men have inflicted upon one another in all ages and countries. Upon what ground, then, can war, which is the cause of these evils, be justified? War is a terrible evil, and it is right that a sense of the miseries which it brings upon the earth should be ever present to our minds. There may be evils, such as slavery and oppression, which are greater still. In this country any man of courage and spirit would rather die than submit to the yoke of the foreigner. The sword was not allowed to drop from the hands of our fathers while all that they held most dear seemed to be at the mercy of the great conqueror who overran Europe. And all who are their

descendants would no more think of admitting the invader to our shores than of allowing the burglar or murderer to force a way into our houses. The justification is in both cases the same; the necessity for self-defense.

So far, the question which has been raised [illegible] to answer itself: for no reasonable person doubts that on some occasions nations, like individuals, must defend themselves against assault and attack. May we go a step further and extend the term self-defense so as to include not only present but future dangers? May we go out to meet our enemy when he is still afar off? Or must we wait until he is knocking at our gates? We must admit, I think, that distance makes no difference, and that a war in India or China may be as justifiable as a war nearer home. If we are to keep the citadel we can not give up the outworks; if we are to defend our shores we must also secure the sea to our ships. And the greater the preparation for war the greater, also, may be our chance of escaping from it. We must not make the love of peace an excuse for indolence and vacillation of purpose, or impotence of the [illegible] we have to bear in order to assure ourselves of the blessings of freedom.

Let me put another class of cases. May we ever go beyond the rights or interests of our own country? May we be ever allowed to assist the weak and oppressed by going to war with their oppressors? For example should we have done right in taking [illegible] to secure the full nationality of Italy, to enfranchise the crushed subjects of Turkey? Or when some signal crime or wickedness is disgracing the civilized world such as the slave trade was in the last generation, are we not justified, even at the risk of war with other nations, in interfering to prevent it? Or can it be maintained that vast tracts of country are to be left to the occupation of barbarous hordes, or that [illegible] are to be forever desolated by tyranny and oppression? Many and great are the miseries of the world, and we can not by turning aside from them get rid of our obligations respecting them. We can not escape war merely by abstaining from it. The nations of the world are connected by many ties and touch one another at many points. No one of them can be a hermit and dwell apart from the rest. The attempt to do so is like the attempt of an individual to retire into some lonely place. Still he finds the world returning upon him when he least expects it, and in the hour of need he has no friends. Having never assisted others

he can not expect to receive assistance from them. As there are duties which individuals of the same nation owe to one another, so there are duties of a somewhat different kind which nations are called upon to fulfill toward other nations from time to time. When we can promote freedom or good government in another country; when we can prevent aggression; when we can stop, by our good offices, an impending struggle — then to stand aloof, in a selfish regard for our own interest, is neither expedient nor right. We know that to confer benefits on others may sometimes involve a risk or loss to ourselves; but for nations, as for individuals, generosity is the best policy. The greatest of all risks is for a single nation to be isolated when all the jealousies of the world are combined against it. So we seem to arrive at the conclusion that a war undertaken in self-defense is natural and right, and that under the rights of self-defense must be included the protection of our countrymen in distant lands and of our interests in the future as well as in the present. It must be carried on with a serious mind, with a consistent purpose, and not without the hope of benefiting other nations as well as ourselves; it can only be justified by the event whether it leaves the world better off than it found it. There are many evils for which war provides the only remedy, and we can not say that centuries of oppression are better than a struggle for independence. The religion of Christ gives no sanction or encouragement to war. The conscience of mankind acknowledges that while wars continue there is something not altogether right in the world; and yet under given circumstances it may be the duty of a nation to strike the blow; the greatest safety may be the willingness to meet the greatest danger.

But there are other aspects to which the relation of Christianity to war admits of being considered. The difference in the manner of conducting war now and in former times, even in the last century, is as great, truly, as the difference between the lives and actions of civilized men and of savages. In ancient times it was thought that while the event was uncertain discipline and order must be observed; but when the victory was won, then all the lusts and passions of men were allowed to break forth, and human nature was to compensate itself for the restraints which had been imposed upon it. But in the last great struggle of two neighboring nations the most repulsive features of war seem to

have disappeared. While the physical horrors were as great, or even greater, the moral appeared to have been minimized; and we shall not be fanciful in attributing this happy change to the greater influence of Christianity, to the spread of education, to the higher standard of opinion which prevails in the world.

Let me put the matter in another way. A great nation is not necessarily demoralized by war; nor are our soldiers and sailors at all worse than other men. Do we not delight to hear from them the story of their brave deeds? And we often seek them out when their term of active service is over that we may place them in positions of trust and responsibility. There is one quality in them which raises them above other classes of their countrymen—they have overcome the fear of death. There is a nobility and freedom of character in a man who is willing to part with his life which atones for many lesser failings; and often the bravest is also the gentlest. He can not weep for his dying or fallen friend—he must steel himself against such weakness. In the moment of victory the news may be brought to him that the brother in arms who is dearest to him has met a soldier's death; in the solitude of the night his thoughts will sometimes turn to the home in which his wife sits waiting for his return, in which his young children are asleep or at play. He can not but know these things, and know that they are most precious to him. He has no fear himself; but he must feel for them. So we may picture to ourselves at this moment the thoughts and lives of our soldiers who in a more especial manner than is possible for us are devoting themselves to the service of their country. The sacrifices which we are called upon to make are slight indeed in comparison with these. We commend them to God, and we pray that the work in which they are engaged may not end in an idle dream of conquest and aggrandizement, but in the extirpation of slavery, in the restoration of peace and order, in the extension of commerce and civilization to the most degraded races of the earth. So the ancient and famous country whose history is so interesting to many of us, whose people have been trodden under foot for so many centuries, may renew its life, and receive at our hands the gift of good government, and no longer harassed by exactions, may at last find rest and obtain the just reward of their labors.

Let me add another aspect of the question. War is full of splendid actions, and some of the greatest and noblest examples on which the eye of a nation can be fixed are to be found among sailors and soldiers. So our fathers loved the great sailor who expected every man to do his duty almost like a friend or a brother. The great soldier whom some of us here present may have seen in the days of our youth. Has not his character been a treasure to the army and to the nation? He was the simplest and most truthful of men, in whom common sense was a kind of genius or inspiration. The most obvious words flowing from his lips were felt to have a greater weight than the most eloquent orations of others; for he meant what he said, his motives of action were direct and straightforward, he had never anything to excuse or to be ashamed of. He had that in his bearing which gave men confidence in him—authority. No one doubted his patriotism or disinterestedness. During the long war he had to contend with enemies at home as well as abroad, and afterward, as some will remember, he used to say that he was equally ready to serve Her Majesty in office or out of office; and in the midst of a great party conflict he was strong only in the conviction that the Queen's government must be carried on. His modesty seemed rather to wonder at his own exploits. "I can not think," he used to say, "how I wrote those dispatches." He seemed rather to decline than to affect popularity; he was certainly unmoved by it. I have endeavored to recall a few traits of the great captain as he was present to the minds of his countrymen thirty years ago. Let him not be forgotten merely because "the old order changeth, yielding to the new," and we are entering on a new sphere of politics. And quite recently there was one of whom all men are still thinking—the great soldier whose death has pierced the heart of a nation as if he had been personally known to every one of us. His character was of another sort, and his life was attuned to another and perhaps higher strain. The term "good soldier" could not, with propriety, have been applied to him. Rather he was like a prophet, newly inspired to give deliverance to the slave and captive and to reform the oppressions of the earth. Seldom in our day has there been set such an example of devotion to duty, to his country, and to his God. He being dead yet speaks to us. His life has been a help to many; and it may be that the remembrance of

his name will restore peace and happiness to an oppressed country. The world thought him mad because he was not of the world; for men of his class, like the prophets and saints of old, are apt to be deemed extravagant, partly because they take no thought for the morrow, what they shall eat, or what they shall drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed; living in the presence of the Eternal they are really different from other men, and have their own ways of speaking and acting; and partly because there is some weakness in human nature which at these heights seems incapable of sustaining itself, and mingles the fancies of the hour with everlasting truth.

Lastly, my brethren, the soldier's life is the figure under which St. Paul represents that other warfare which the servant of Christ is ever carrying on against himself and against the world: "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." We speak also of the Church militant here against various forms of evil. There is a battle going on between the spirit and the flesh, between knowledge and ignorance, between the higher and the lower principles of human nature. We imagine to ourselves allies fighting on either side, and that in this battle God and angels are spectators; and we sometimes contrast the disorder and turmoil of this world with the peace and order of another. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Yet we know, also, how greatly our Christian and all churches have fallen short of this ideal, and of their mission; how often they have made a compromise with the world instead of resisting its evils; and how in our own life there is little of struggle and effort, but a falling-in with the world and acquiescence in the customs and opinions of men. A life such as that which I have just been describing awakens us to a sense of the unreality of our own lives, for no man has a right to be at peace with himself who has not been at war with himself at some time or other. And there is a victory which he wins over himself when he has subjugated his passions to the purposes of God in the government of the world; when he has fought against the sins and prejudices which so easily beset us; when he has learned to live not to himself but to God. The best and highest things in this world seem to flow out of the lives of a few men who have devoted themselves to the service of their fellow-creatures. They

have fought against the evils of the world; they have sought to raise the sense of truth and the standard of public opinion, which are ever tending to decline among us; and the best times in our own lives from which almost all the good in them seems to be derived are a few moments when we have been awakened out of sleep; when we have resolved, when we have acted, when we have become conscious that we are in the presence of God, and see things as they truly are.

TRAINING FOR DIVINE PURPOSES.

BY THE REV. CANON WESTCOTT.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, January 11, 1885.

"The child grew, and waxed strong."—LUKE ii. 40.

THESE words are used twice by St. Luke in significant connection. He uses them, first, to describe the early years of John the Baptist, and then again in the text he applies them to Christ Himself. The words do not in themselves offer any thing strange or peculiar for our notice; they might be said in ordinary cases of any child; they express what we habitually take for granted as the natural course of things; and it is in this very fact, that they are so simple, so natural, so completely on the level of our common life, that gives them their richness for us. For if they are very plain and ordinary words of themselves they become full of wonder and mystery when we regard them in the context in which they stand. If we think who they were, the Baptist and the Christ, of whom they were spoken by the evangelist, and what was the earthly work which they had to do, we shall surely marvel that nothing more extraordinary is told of us of their progress to manhood. Can it be, we are tempted to ask—can it be that the Baptist and the Christ, the last and greatest of the prophets, the Son of God Himself, received by slow degrees and in common ways of God's providence the human strength which was needed for their work? Can it be that the obscure circumstances in which they were placed furnished a fit training for their after labors? Can it be that while they were outwardly different in every thing but their Divine mission, one phrase sums up the law by which their characters were alike molded?

Such questions as these, if we press them with any thing of impatience, reveal to us our ignorance of the Divine method of life. According to that, a man finds in him and about him, in his endowments and in his environments, just what he requires for the accom-

plishment of his work. We need not go from our proper place in order to discipline ourselves for God's service; we need not strive after gifts which He has not entrusted to us, or forms of action which are foreign to our position, in order to do our part as members of His Church. It is enough that we grow and wax strong under the action of those forces by which He moves us within and without if we desire to fulfill, according to the measure of our powers, the charge which he has prepared for us. Thus it was that John the Baptist, the stern, bold preacher, grew up in the desert according to the angel's message—a lonely boy, a lonely youth, until the days of his showing unto Israel, communing only with the severest forms of nature and with the most awful thoughts of God. Thus it was that Jesus lived in the calm seclusion of a bright, upland valley in the Jewish fellowship of a holy home, subject to His parents and in favor with God and man, until His hour came. In that silent discipline of thirty years there was no anxious anticipation of the future, no wistful lingering on the past—the past, used to the utmost, was the foundation of the future. And can we not [illegible] of the silent, daily, unbroken, which represents the main part of the Lord's life is indeed a part of the Gospel? In that long, unvaried, commonplace preparation, can we not trace, as in a figure, the way of God's dealing with us now? He works still as he worked in old time. Day by day, under his eye and hand, we are moving toward death and toward life; day by day he places within our reach the materials out of which He will enable us to build out of our true selves temples in which He may dwell forever; and we, on our part, use the materials well or ill, though we know it not, for each night closes over a [illegible] which [illegible] to work—another race has been run, and other palms are won.

This, then, is the lesson of the Epiphany, the lesson of this day's services, the lesson of this week's loss, which I desire to enforce—the power of a daily life, even the most sinful and uneventful, to train us, if it be God's will, for great duties, but in any case for his use. And surely our hearts tell us that we need the lesson. We are always inclined to look for some joy or sorrow as that which shall stir the energies of our souls, for some sharp sickness or bereavement as that which shall make us more [illegible] in God, for some blessing of deliverance or [illegible] which shall bring us to love Him with tender devotion.

But when these exceptional events happen they do but reveal to us what we have already become; then, at length, when our eyes are opened, we see ourselves; then we know what we are; then we realize the value of little things, the abiding results of routine; then we marvel, it may be, to know assuredly that we despised Christ when He came to us in strange disguises; or it may be that we welcomed Him in the least of His little ones, or in the most insignificant of His workings.

Great occasions do not make heroes or cowards; they simply unveil them to the eyes of men. Silently and imperceptibly as we wake and sleep we grow and wax strong; we grow and wax weak; and at last some crisis shows us what we have become. The facts of the material world help us to feel the reality of this still and secret process which is the universal law of life. The ground on which we stand, the solid rocks which lie beneath it, are nothing but the accumulated results of the action of forces which we observe in action still. A few drops of rain gather on the hillside and find an outlet down its slope; grain by grain a channel is fashioned, fresh rills add their waters to the flowing stream, and at last the runlet which a stone might have diverted from its course has grown into a river which no human force can stem. The sapling is planted on an open ridge straight and vigorous; season after season the winds blow through its branches; it bends and bends and rises again, but with ever lessening power; and when years have gone by, and the sapling has become a tree, its strange distorted shape bears witness to the final power of the force which at each moment it seemed able to overcome. And so it is with all of us. From small beginnings flow the currents of our lives, from constant and unnoticed impulses we take our bias; the stream is ever gathering strength, the bend is ever being confirmed or corrected. At any time of this life our character is represented by the sum of our past lives. There is not one act, not one purpose, which does not leave its trace, though we may be unable to distinguish and measure its value. There is not one drop which does not add something to the flowing river, not one branch which does not in some way shape the rising tree. The appointed duty heartily or carelessly gone through makes us weaker for the next effort. The unkind word spoken or the kind word not spoken makes us less tender when our love is next needed; the evil thing done or the evil thought cherished makes advantage ground for the tempter when he

next assails us. The prayer neglected or said with the lips only makes it harder for us to seek God when we next desire to find Him. The communion superstitiously slighted or superstitiously frequented makes it more and more difficult for us to see the transfigured by the brightness of a Divine presence. In this way it is that we grow and wax weak, happy only if some day of reckoning startles us by the sense of our loss; and we offer to God in the humblest spirit what remains. And, on the other hand, every faithful answer to the least claim upon our service, every manful contest for the right, every painful struggle with self-indulgence, every sore temptation met in the name and strength of Christ, every striving toward God in prayer and praise is fruitful for the future—fruitful in self-sacrifice, in courage, in endurance, in the joy of Divine fellowship. In this way we grow and wax strong for later work even while as yet we know not what God will have us to do—happy in this, that as we have met His will we can leave all issues in His hands.

We know not, indeed, what He will hereafter wish us to do; but we do know this, that we must be to-day as servants waiting for their Lord; that all we do and all we leave undone goes to make us what we shall be; that His appearing, in whatever shape it is revealed to each one of us, will show of what sort our work has been; that the brightness of His work will not change us, but disclose us.

Again and again this or that has been fulfilled before our own eyes in the broad fields of contemporary history and in the range of our own personal experience. It has been fulfilled in those conflicts of nations which have rearranged the map of Europe. It has been fulfilled in the sharp agony which made the inhabitants of India our fellow-citizens. It has been fulfilled in sudden trials at home, in which the very violence of the tempest has allowed us to see once more the solid foundations of patriotism and loyalty and truth on which the fabric of our English State is built. It has been fulfilled in many a private life, in soldiers and statesmen, in simple men and women, who in the crisis of some great need have used, in answer to the call of God, the treasures of wisdom and devotion and love which they had unconsciously gathered under His teaching. It has been fulfilled, I venture to think, in the life of him who is in the minds of all of us to-day, to whom his Master came last week when we were preparing to celebrate the

Epiphany. In that life nothing strikes one, who looked at it from a distance, so much as the calm strength with which the teacher, the pastor, the ruler was enabled to meet new, and perhaps unexpected, duties. You, I suppose, knew how the quiet and earnest oversight of an exceptional parish had fitted him to exercise it for the administration of a vast diocese; you I remember, had so watched the effective wisdom with which the diocese was ordered as to feel that the work had prepared its bishop for taking the lead of the spiritual forces concentrated in London; you who had followed only his grave and measured public utterances could not have been prepared for the tenderness and pathos of the last charge delivered two months ago in which he took on himself the dying bequest of his illustrious predecessor, and with a noble humility pressed upon his clergy the weightier matters of the Gospel, the needs of inquiring, anxious, devout, earnest souls, and invoked upon them the crowning grace of sympathy, the last blessing of peace. And now, when his work is over, when his prayer has been singularly fulfilled, when [illegible] his last day, when universal respect finds reverent utterance, we are allowed to discern the secret of his influence. Complete and uncalculating devotion to his good work, because he looked upon it as the work of God, made him strong to meet each fresh call, because he heard it as the call of God. He lived, I believe, as one who felt that the Lord's words spoken in spirit to every apostolic minister, "Ye did not choose Me, but I choose you," drive away from every surrendered soul all thoughts of self-assertion and of self-distrust. For such a one high office was [illegible] of a Divine commission, a Divine ministry; his duty was to maintain inflexible fairness, large-hearted charity, sincere faith in the exercise of functions which are made ineffective even by the suspicion of private aims. For such a one the ventures of eager enthusiasm had no overmastering charm; his duty was to test without impatience the results of new methods, to guard without misgiving the influence of old institutions, and then to give to that which was at last approved by experience a support made surer by delay. For such a one difficulties did not come as disheartening surprises or provoke the rigid resistance of technical authority. His duty was to forget himself wholly; and when, fifteen years ago, he was unexpectedly required to deal in this abbey with a

problem of singular perplexity and painfulness, his words must have come to many of us as the words of one who had found that the promise of his Lord does not fail for those who seek after His Spirit. For such a one the excitement and the success of controversy had no attraction. His duty was not to limit, by the most irrevocable of human words, what has not been limited for us by our formularies, but to acknowledge, in all its fullness and all its variety, the beauty of that Divine order of which the notes are "righteousness, peace, joy, and the Holy Ghost."

So he grew and waxed strong, and he has left us the example of his strength lovingly acknowledged for our encouragement and guidance. He has left us the counsel, which comes now with the force of a bequest, that we should make the ensuing mission a time of prayer and intercession by all and for all—a time for drawing our hearts and sympathies together. And, O my brethren, with these his words ringing in our ears from beyond the grave, let us not grow weary in our prayers for those with whom rests the responsibility of naming his successor. Oh, for him or, whom the burden of the diocese shall be laid, a burden only to be taken as God's charge, only to be endured by God's support! Questions are ripening for discussion by which all we hold most precious is imperiled. Evil forces are gathering with which battle must be done. It will be for us or for our children to show that our faith can solve fresh problems and win new victories. But while we feel all this keenly, it is not our part to anticipate, with anxious curiosity, what the future will bring; we can best prepare for that by doing in quietness and confidence, what we find prepared for us; by enforcing, with watchful solicitude, the plans of personal holiness; by keeping our eyes fixed on the glorious text by which earth and heaven are united; by seeing all work as it truly is in Him whom we love; by remembering that we are all bound together, in the Bishop's words, as a whole body, in which the rich are to assist the poor, the strong the weak. So shall we grow and wax strong; so, if need be, we shall revel in the fullness of our growth, in the energy of our strength, when the shock of conflict comes; or, if not, we shall none the less be in the sight of God what we were not known to be; we shall be meet for the Master's use in the other offices of labor that we can yet imagine; we shall have done our work, though men have not seen its accomplishment; we shall have

done, I say, our work, for to form a character is the work of our personal life. And when once we see this, the inequalities of our outward circumstances cease to be startling. If wealth, or fame, or knowledge, or length of days were the final end of human existence, then, indeed, the difference between man and man would be an unspeakable injustice; but if we are placed here to gain a character, if we are rather under education than under trial, [illegible] for labor, for truth, for purity, for love around them and within them. The highest service may be prepared for and done in the humblest surroundings. The words of the Gospel have only gathered force and not lost freshness as the centuries have rolled on. The message comes to us not from kings' palaces, but from the desert went forth the prophet who made ready the way of the Lord; not from kings' palaces, but from the humble cottage at Nazareth went forth the Saviour of the world who preached the Gospel to the poor. In silence, in waiting, in obscure, unnoticed offices, in years of uneventful, unrecorded duties the Son of God grew and waxed strong. May God fulfill for, and through each one of us, the work which he has prepared. Whether the day of our showing be there in His sight or here in the sight of man, may reveal it, through His mercy, a character which has been shaped comely, patiently, trustfully, day by day, out of each day's duties in the light of His most holy presence. And, brethren, may those who shall hereafter tell the story of your life and mine when it is done be able to sum up all in this: He grew and waxed strong; he grew in the likeness of his Lord; he waxed strong with the power of Christ within him.

BUDDHISM.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, D.D.

"All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them."—JOHN x. 8.

THERE is an old legend concerning the patriarch Abraham, either of Arabian or Persian origin, to the following effect: Terah, the father of Abraham, manufactured and sold idols. Having to leave home one day, he entrusted his goods to the care of Abraham. An aged man called and inquired the price of an idol, when Abraham asked him how old he was, to which question he obtained the answer, "Three score years." "Three score years," said Abraham; "and yet to worship a thing my father's slaves made in a few hours! Strange, that a man of sixty should bow his gray head to a creature such as that!" The old man blushed crimson from shame, and left without making a purchase. Soon afterward there came a sorrowful-looking female, bringing an offering to the gods. "Give it to them thyself, and then see how readily they eat it," said Abraham. She did so and departed. Abraham then took a hammer and broke in pieces all the idols except the largest, and into the hand of that one he introduced the hammer. When Terah came home he was surprised to see the damaged state of his property, and angrily asked, "What prot me wretch [illegible] gods?" Abraham then replied: "During thine absence a certain man brought yonder food to the gods, and the younger ones began to eat it. The old god thereupon grew enraged at their boldness, and seizing the hammer, smashed them." "Dost thou mock thine aged father?" said Terah. "Do I not know that they can neither eat nor move?" "And yet," answered Abraham—"yet thou dost worship them, and would have me worship them, too."

This story rises to our minds as we think of the lamentable prevalence of idolatry in India under Hinduism, and of the rise in the very midst of Hinduism of the system of Buddha. It was from the very

midst of Hinduism that Buddhism sprang, and that as a protest against the idolatry of the Brahmans and the rigid demands of caste.

In the year 624 B. C. was born Gotama, son of the king of the country around the mountains of Nepal. He and his father belonged to the second grade of society, or the military caste. From his infancy Gotama was trained in the faith of his father—Hinduism; but, according to the stories concerning him, he, from his youth, was conscious that he was born to be a great reformer and leader of men. It is said that when only five months old he sat in the air without any support, and that in his very infancy he exclaimed, "I am the most exalted in the world; I am chief in the world; I am the most excellent in the world; this is my last birth; hereafter there is to me no other existence." No reliance can be placed upon such stories, which, doubtless, have been concocted since Gotama became famous, with a desire to render his career more wonderful to the students of history. Nothing reliable is really known of Gotama till he became a man. It is said that very early in life he married and passed his days in luxurious enjoyments, till, when twenty-eight years of age, a deity appeared to him in four visions—as a man broken down by age, as a sick man, as a decaying corpse, and, lastly, as a dignified hermit. The meaning of the vision was explained by Channa, his attendant. The result of the visions was that Gotama resolved to renounce the world and devote himself to a hermit's life. As he sat in his garden one night, meditating upon the visions and forming his plans for the future, he was told that a son was born to him. "This is my strongest fetter," he said; "I shall have to break." As he returned home, he found the villagers delighted by the announcement of the child's advent. Gotama was serious and even sad, for that night he had determined to flee and forsake all. He went to the threshold of his wife's room and looked upon her as she slept with one hand on the head of the infant. He would fain have taken that dear child in his arms and clasped it to his heart ere he departed; but he saw he must remove the mother's hand, and so possibly awaken her; and thus all his intentions would be frustrated. So he reluctantly tore himself away from the two dearer to him than all beside, closed the door, left the palace, "and rode away into the night to become a penniless and despised student and a homeless wanderer." This story of his "great renunciation" is found among the earliest accounts of Buddha's

career; but how much of it is purely legendary we can not tell.

It was in his twenty-ninth year he retired from the world and withdrew into the jungles of Uruvela, where for six years, attended by five faithful disciples, he passed through a course of ascetic discipline. In the same forest, under a Bodhi, or Bo-tree, he is said to have attained to supreme wisdom. As he sat under the shadow of that "tree of wisdom," as it is called, "he was attacked by a formidable host of demons; but he remained tranquil, like the star in the midst of the storm, and the demons, when they had exerted their utmost power without effect, passed away like the thunder-cloud retiring from the orb of the moon, causing it to appear in greater beauty. At the tenth hour of the same night he attained the wisdom by which he knew the exact circumstances of all the beings that have ever existed in the infinite worlds; at the twentieth hour he received the Divine eyes, by which he had the power to see all things within the space of the infinite systems of worlds as clearly as if they were close at hand; and at the tenth hour of the following morning, or the close of the third watch of the night, he attained the knowledge by which he was enabled to understand the sequence of existence, the cause of sorrow, and of its cessation. The object of his protracted toils and numerous sacrifices, carried on incessantly through myriads of ages, was now accomplished. By having become a Buddha he had received a power by which he could perform any act whatever, and a wisdom by which he could see perfectly any object, or understand any truth, to which he chose to direct his attention."* Let it, then, be remembered that the term Buddha is only an epithet, meaning "the perfectly enlightened one." There were twenty-four Hindoos, three of whom were Brahmans, previously to Gotama who professed to be "perfectly enlightened," and were hence termed "Buddha." But Gotama seems to have made a deeper impression upon the minds of his countrymen than any of his predecessors. He is the actual founder of Buddhism, and his followers esteem him as incomparable, no other Buddha being worthy of mention as competitor. The Bo-tree, under the spreading branches of which Gotama received his inspiration, is worshipped by the Buddhists, and is as much an emblem among them as

* "Eastern Monachism." By Mr. Hardy.

the cross is among Christians. Behind the Buddhist temple near Gaya stands what is said to be the actual tree, but what is really an offshoot from it. A branch of the veritable tree was planted in Ceylon 245 B. C., and has grown there ever since, being now 2,130 years old—*the oldest historical tree in the world.* The followers of Buddha have taken the greatest possible care of this tree. They have built up terraces of earth around it, so that some of the living branches may throw out fresh roots; pillars of iron or masonry have been erected to support the long branches; in times of drought it is carefully watered; while a complete series of continuous records of every apparent change in the tree and all that has been done to it is preserved as evidence of the identity of the tree.

The opinions entertained by his followers concerning the exact position of Buddha do not all agree. There is a general consensus of opinion as to his being a genuine historical personage; but beyond that there are differences. Some regard him as an ordinary mortal, but possessed of more extensive knowledge and wisdom than any other teacher; some, again, as possessed of divinity as well as humanity—a Divine incarnation. While others think that so vast a change passed upon him under the Bo-tree that his humanity was completely lost and absorbed in the divinity, and that he is actually a god. When Gotama entered on his Buddhaship he journeyed to Benares and there delivered his first discourse—concerning the effects of which it is said that "each of the assembled hosts thought himself addressed in his own language, and so thought the different kinds of animals, great and small." The discourse was upon "the necessity of adhering to the 'Middle Path';—that is to say, in being free, on the one hand, from 'devotion to the enervating pleasures of sense which are degrading, vulgar, sensual, vain, and profitless'; and, on the other, from any trust in the efficacy of the mortifications practiced by Hindu ascetics, 'which are painful, vain, and useless.'" Eight things were inculcated—viz., right belief, right aims, right speech, right actions, right means of livelihood, right endeavor, right mindfulness, and right meditation. Five months from the time of his obtaining his Buddhaship he had secured some sixty disciples, and these he sent forth as missionaries. He himself traveled through many parts of India, and visited Ceylon.

He continued earnestly laboring for the spread of his order till he

was seized with illness which proved fatal. Just before his death he called his followers around him, gave instructions as to the mode in which the elder and younger members should address one another, asked if any doubts existed in their minds—if so, he requested they would mention them, and he would resolve the doubts; and then, after a pause, he said, "I now impress it upon you; decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence." Such were his last words. Very soon after they were spoken he grew unconscious, and in that condition passed away from earth. It has been claimed for him that "he was the greatest and wisest and best of the Hindus," because Buddhism was the beautiful child of Hinduism.

During the forty-five years of his Buddhaship he is said to have delivered 84,000 discourses, which are contained in the sacred books of Buddhists, called *Bimi*. These books consist of seven or eight volumes, and they are treated with far more reverence than we Christians treat our Scriptures. They are superstitiously venerated and worshiped. No figures of speech can be found by the Buddhists strong enough to express their esteem for these writings. Take the following as a poetical but powerful specimen of their laudations: "The discourses of Buddha are as a divine charm to cure the poison of evil desire; a Divine medicine to heal the disease of anger; a lamp in the midst of the darkness of ignorance; a fire, like that which burns at the end of a kalpa, to destroy the evils of repeated existence; a meridian sun to dry up the mud of covetousness; a great rain to quench the flame of sensuality; a thicket to block up the road that leads to the narakas; a ship in which to sail to the opposite shore of the ocean of existence; a collyrium for taking away the eye-film of heresy; a moon to bring out the night-blowing lotus of merit; a succession of trees bearing immortal fruit, placed here and there, by which the traveler may be enabled to cross the desert of existence; a ladder by which to ascend to the dêwa-lokas; a straight highway by which to pass to the incomparable wisdom; a door of entrance to the eternal city of *Nirwana*; a talisman tree to give whatever is requested; a flavor more exquisite than any other in the three worlds; a treasury of the best things it is possible to obtain; and a power by which may be appeased the sorrow of every sentient being."*

* Rev. Spence Hardy.

From such extravagant eulogy we shall be anxious to know what are some of the teachings contained in these sacred writings of Buddhists. It will be only possible to take a brief glance at the chief doctrines. Those who wish to know more are referred to the Rev. Spence Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," Dr. Rhys David's "Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gotama, the Buddha," and Rockhill's "Life of Buddha."

1. Buddha recognized *no God*. The Hindus have a sleepy, inactive, materialist deity termed Brahm; but the Buddhist is, verily, self-existent, infinite, and eternal creator, preserver, and destroyer. In the strict sense of the word, they are atheists. The word atheist comes from the Greek a = not, or without, $\theta\epsilon o\varsigma$ = God, and means one who denies the existence of the Supreme Being. This is precisely the position of the Buddhists. And yet it may seem strange to us that, having no God, they are yet idolaters. There exists among them a superstitious reverence for Buddha. Though they believe that he ceases to exist, yet they erect temples to Buddha and construct images of him. These images vary in shape. In Ceylon they represent a handsome native; but in Nepāl they have often three heads and six or ten arms.

2. Buddha recognized *no soul* in man—no spirit distinct from the material organization. "The doctrine of a soul, or self," is a heresy, classed with sensuality as worthy of reprobation. According to Buddha, "man consists of an assemblage of different properties or qualities, none of which correspond to the Hindu or modern notion of soul. These are *material* qualities, *sensations*, abstract *ideas*, *tendencies* of mind, and mental *powers*."* Man is said to be continually changing, and each of these divisions "which are only functions of the living body produced by the contact of external objects with the bodily organs," † changes in like manner. No man is regarded as a "separate entity," and no man has within him any abiding principle.

3. And yet, denying the existence of a soul in man, Buddha, nevertheless, believed in and taught the doctrine of *transmigration*. The question, then, at once arises: How could this dogma co-exist with that of no soul? If man has no spirit, what is there to pass into another form and reappear in sorrow or joy in another age? This opens a fundamental, if not *the* chief, doctrine of Buddhism. It brings us face to face with what Buddhists term *Karma*, a power or principle which rules

* Dr. Davids, p. 90. † Ditto, p. 41.

the world, and which is now called the Law of merit or demerit. It is believed that when a person dies, his merit or demerit reappears in a new being, who, according to the deserts of the man who has just expired, is more or less happy. Though this doctrine is incomprehensible, yet it is generally accepted. Buddhism has been subjected to modifications and alterations in different lands into which it has been introduced; but in every land Buddhists cling to the unaltered doctrine of *Karma*. From the standpoint of the Buddhist the whole path is by this doctrine taken between belief in the possession of a soul by man and, on the other hand, the repudiation of a belief in moral justice and retribution. It may be said, and that fairly, that such a doctrine destroys a man's moral responsibility. But, in reply to this, the Buddhists very speciously argue thus: "A man plants a mango, and the fruit produces a tree, which tree belongs to the man, though that which he planted was not a tree but a fruit. A man betroths a girl, who, when she is grown into a woman, is claimed by the man, though that which he betrothed was not a woman but a girl. A man sets fire to the village, and is punished for it, though it was not he who burned the village, but the fire. The tree came by means of the fruit; the woman came by means of the girl; and the fire came by means of the man; and this 'by means of,' in all cases, is the only nexus between the parties, whether it be the fruit and the tree, the girl and the woman, or the fire and he who kindled it. In like manner, when the elements of existence are dissolved, so another being comes into existence by means of the *Karma* of that existence, inheriting all its responsibilities, there is still no escape from the consequences of sin." But a thoughtful mind will at once look through such specious reasoning and see its fallacy. Though the crime may be, by this showing, punished, it is not the criminal who endures the punishment. It is distinctly another being who is made to bear the penalty of misdeeds—a being who never knew the guilty one and a being whom the guilty one never knew. We Christians believe from the teaching of our Scriptures, and from daily observation and experience, that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." But with Buddhism there is no identity between the reaper and the sower. The reaper is ignorant of what were the exact evils committed by the sower. The reaper had no power of control over the sower. The reaper is obliged to inherit all the fruits of his predecessor

sors. A new sentient being becomes heir to all the merit or demerit of the man who has just died. We Christians believe and know that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come"; but Buddhism says that the expectation of reward and happiness here or hereafter is folly. It says that "the consciousness of self is a delusion; that the organized being, sentient existence, since it is not infinite, is bound up inextricably with ignorance; and, therefore, with sin, and, therefore, with sorrow." Happiness and recompense here never can be obtained; and as for the hereafter, when a man dies he dies *all*—nothing bodily or mental will exist; and, having no soul, all that will remain will be the accumulated result of his actions, words, and thoughts—his *Karma*. This is, indeed, gloomy teaching. There is nothing of gospel about it; and the marvel is that a doctrine so disheartening should have found for centuries so many adherents.

4. It is no marvel that such a belief is supplemented by another doctrine—that of *Nirwana*—that is absolute extinction of being. Buddha taught, and the Buddhists believe, that the attainment of non-existence is possible; and that that is the highest felicity within the reach of any being. They say that a manly self-mortification, austerity, and strict [illegible] of *Karma*, so that the merit or demerit will no longer be transferred to a new being. But this *Nirwana* has a *present* bearing. The Buddhist has set before him "four noble paths," as they are termed, by which, if faithfully pursued, he will enjoy that *Nirwana* before he passes away from this world. In the *first* path, which the Buddhists term "*conversion*," the man becomes free from (1) delusion of self, (2) from doubt as to Buddha and his doctrines, and (3) from belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies. In the *second* path he reduces to a minimum lust, hatred, and delusion. In the *third* path the last remnants of sensuality and malevolence are destroyed. In the *fourth* path he becomes free from desire for material existence; from pride, or immaterial self-righteousness, and ignorance. He is then perfect, according to the Buddhist faith, and has attained to *Nirwana*. He is supposed to have reached a sinless, sorrowless, calm state of mind—the *summum bonum* of Buddhism; [illegible] there will be nothing left to bring about

a new being, bearing, his merit or demerit; there will be a destruction of his *Karma*, and he will be completely extinct.

Such, then, are the principal features of Buddhism. It denies the existence of a Supreme Being; the existence of a soul in man; the existence of a future state for happy or unhappy spirits. It abolishes all animal sacrifices and vicarious sufferings. It upholds the doctrine of transmigration, in the sense of *Karma*. It advocates, supremely, self-mortification as the way to attain absolute extinction; and it disregards the distinctions of caste, so generally prevalent among Hindus. It is fair to say that in the writings of Buddha, and among his injunctions, are many excellent things. A good Buddhist—that is, one who follows the directions of Buddha—can not fail to be a most moral, honest, virtuous, patient, and intelligent man. Buddhism, if strictly adhered to, tends to make this life morally correct. But the *other* life is completely ignored; the interests of the never-dying soul are not provided for; the Divine Being is slighted and denied; and hence there is little hope of any conscientious adherence to the strict teaching of Buddha.

It is very remarkable how Buddhism has spread and grown. It is estimated that there are more Buddhists than there are members of the Christian Catholic persuasion, inclusive of Roman Catholics and adherents of the Greek Church. The numbers of all Christian professors, inclusive of the Greek and Roman Churches, are given as 327,000,000, while the numbers of Buddhists are not less than 500,000,000. Of course, statistics in matters of religion are not to be implicitly relied upon, inasmuch as many persons are classed under the distinctive heads of sects of religionists who may never have occupied their minds with the truth or error of the system of which they are reputed members. In this country men are written down "Christians" simply because they have been born in a land where the religion of Jesus prevails. So, doubtless, many are classed as Buddhists because they have been bred where Buddhism abounds. Nevertheless, the success and spread of Buddhism is beyond a doubt.

Like Judaism, and like Hindooism, Buddhism has been subjected to changes and modifications since its rise in the fifth century B. C. As it has passed into China, Japan, Ceylon, and Thibet it has taken up new features and dropped some of its early characteristics. An early and primitive Buddhist would never do pray. His utmost devotions were

silent, solitary meditations on the excellencies of Buddha. But now some of the later Buddhists elevate Buddha to such a position of supremacy that prayers are regularly—nay, sometimes [illegible] to him. In Thibet there are what are termed "Trees of the Law," which are lofty flag staffs with silk flags flying from the top. Upon these flags are emblazoned the six syllables which, being interpreted, mean, "Oh, the jewel is in the Lotus!" and the Thibetan believes that whenever the wind blows the silk so that those six syllables are turned toward the heavens a prayer to Buddha is presented. [illegible] their mechanical mode of worship exhibit itself in [illegible] praying wheels. These may be found in Japan, China, and Thibet.

Miss Gordon Cumming, in an interesting article in the *Contemporary Review* of December, 1875, says that in the [illegible] Lama temple, a prayer wheel twelve feet high and about eight feet in diameter, gorgeously draped with scarlet and gold and wreathed with flowers. In letters on the outside, and written many thousand times on the inside on strips of cloth, were the words "Oh, the jewel, the Lotus"—which are two titles of honor given to Buddha. Smaller barrels or wheels, made of brass or bronze, may be found in open spaces in the towns or by streams of water. The running water is made to keep the prayer-wheel in constant motion; and where the water can not be so utilized the wind is pressed into the service. Small cylinders are, in like manner, turned by [illegible] as often as possible. Upon the [illegible] system of Buddhism have been grafted many doctrines which formerly it ignored. Under the name of Lamaism, in Tartary and Thibet, there is mixed up with doctrines concerning Buddha a belief in a Supreme Being, [illegible] eternal, while the ritual is most elaborate. Buddhism, as taught in Ceylon, is regarded as the most ancient, if not the original, form of the system. According to a legend accepted by the natives of the island, Gotama Buddha, when driven from India, took refuge in Ceylon, and ascended into heaven from the summit of Adam's Peak, leaving upon the mountain top the impression of his foot. The priests of Buddha have been said to be one to every four hundred of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They wear a garment of a yellow color, and seldom carry any thing in their hands except an alms-bowl and a fan or hand screen to prevent the eyes from beholding vanity.

Such is the religion, if it can be so called, that is embraced by nearly one-third of the human family—a religion made up of negation, without a Supreme God, without a human soul, without a heaven—offering man mere morality here, with the prospect of entire extinction at the end of his mortal pilgrimage. It differs *toto cœlo* from Christianity. It is true that there are some points of resemblance between it and the religion of Jesus. Both spring from previously existing systems; both are marked by a missionary spirit—a spirit of protest and propagation; both inculcate submission, self-surrender, deadness to the world; both seek the overthrow of the evils of caste and the cultivation of a spirit of brotherhood. But beyond this the analogy fails. Our blessed Christianity presents us with an all-wise, all-loving, all-powerful Father on whom to rely; a sympathetic and ever-present Saviour whom to imitate; a teaching and sanctifying Spirit to whom to yield; an eternal life of honour, holiness, and happiness to which to aspire. Our religion presents us with an indwelling force by which moral and spiritual duties are undertaken: "the love of Christ constraineth us." Instinctively the mind of man shrinks from such cold negations as those of Buddhism, and hence modern Buddhism has deified the Buddha who ignored a deity, and changed *Nirwana* into a paradise.

THE TRIMMING OF THE LAMPS.

BY THE REV. E. PAXTON HOOD.

Preached in Falcon-square Chapel on Sunday Evening, January 4, 1885.

"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.—MATTHEW xxv. 7.

MIDNIGHT!—midnight over the city—midnight! It is a solemn time when all things sleep, and all creation [illegible] home and passion and sorrow and remorse. Yet what sights and sounds are abroad! What shadows flit along the streets—Midnight!—when fear wakes and whispers to silence, and both stand by the bedside and startle conscience, and call up remorse. Midnight! I have [illegible] among the mountains, among the spectral and [illegible] mountain lakes; and I have spent midnight on the sea, on the dark, heaving, solemn waves; but I think, did we realize its solemnity, midnight over the dark city is the most awful, the most mysterious. Think what wakes there, think what sleeps there—life, death, sickness, sin! There the mother trims her lamp by the cot of her dying child, and there the student keeps his solemn vigil, and trims his lamp and spends his life with his midnight oil.

Hark! suddenly the silence around is broken.

How often we who live in great cities hear it broken! I slept some time since in a large town, and in the deep night I was awakened by a storm of bells—the town hall bell was booming on the air; a large fire was arching the town over with the red canopy of flame. I looked out on the night. I heard the rushing tramp of feet through the dark. How solemn it all sounded!

A factory on fire! A town on fire! What is all that clangor of bells, the clash and rush of feet, the roar of guns? What are all these to the cry of, "A world on fire!" Hark! Says the text, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." What can it mean? "Seeing, then, that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be? In all holy conversation."

"*Then*"—night—evening and night! I waive the hypothetical in the parable. It was always supposed the Lord would come in His second advent, as His first, by night. "God did not come," says an old writer, "to Adam until evening; but He came. The fire did not fall on Sodom until evening; but it fell." Night—midnight! How naturally the period of our Lord's appearance is connected with night! What a cry must have been when the wail arose from the houses of Egypt in the night-time; and when in all the families the first-born lay dead! And so in familiar accents of terror to some the words came, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps."

They all arose. Five were wise and five foolish. Prudence arose and trimmed her lamp, and called up her sisters. Piety started to her feet next, and roused Faith and Hope and Love; they all arose. And there was Imprudence, that one in with her stained raiment; there was Love to the World, with her wreath of withered passion flowers in her hair; there was Loose Notions and Vain Hope and Fickle—"they all arose and trimmed their lamps." And in that moment all was revealed—they all had their lamps—their truth. Imprudence cried to Piety, "Give us of your oil," and it was Prudence who replied, "Nay, not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." There was a street hard by, near to which, in after times, close to the Broadway, they reared the booths of Vanity Fair. Thither down that street went the foolish virgins to buy oil for the lamps of Vain Hope and False Notions, and the others—the oil sold by False Love and Faithless Fear; while the wise virgins, with white raiment and trimmed lamps, passed on their way, chanting through the slumbering city—

> Ye virgin souls arise
> With all the dead awake,
> And to salvation wise
> Oil in your vessels take,
> Upstarting at the midnight cry,
> "Behold your heavenly Bridegroom nigh!"

Meantime, while they advance or wander there, you and I will remain in the city and talk together; while we walk we will talk.

First, our parable teaches that however long and deeply a man may sleep, he is sure to wake at last. "*Then*"—"*Then*"—Is it not true that to every soul comes the time when God calls, [illegible] plainly, and [illegible] loudly, "*Then?*" There are such critical moments in the histories of lives—moments when we are justified in saying, "Hark! that is the call of God." The calls of God's Providence are like the calls of the hours—they repeat themselves with renewed power in every stroke; perhaps I may say that God never startled and terrified any soul with the inevitable twelve until it has been deaf to the repeated calls of preceding hours. "*Then* shall the kingdom of heaven"—*i.e.*, the kingdom of grace—"be likened to——" "*Then*" God is constantly striking and saying, "Son of man, daughter of man, prepare to meet thy God—set thy house in order. There is another world, and how wilt thou answer to Me there and then?" Then will you "charge God foolishly," and say, "He has never struck upon my soul—He has never called me?" Has He not? Have you never been smitten to solemnity? "Then," when you were struck down by illness—when your wife looked grave, when terrors and tremblings and flutterings came round your heart—"*then*," "*then*"—when the mysterious presence of Death made itself felt, when your daughter lay in convulsions, when your wife turned to you, and, through her tears, said, "It's all over"—*then* "*then*," when that wife herself departed and left you a solitary man—"*then*," when a sudden turn of [illegible] religious [illegible] the spiritual meeting, a crash of circumstance astounded you, and seemed to say, "Look higher, look deeper!" Have you got over these things so easily? Do you remember what they were to you? Is it past emotion—all past? You don't believe in [illegible]; preaching, you say, can't [illegible] for you. You have got the better of all that. Ah, but when God was the Preacher! Do you remember nights you spent in watching? Do you remember voices that said, or seemed to say, "How will it be with you?" Do you remember [illegible] you heard [illegible] through the night? *Then*—you can not hear that clock strike now. Amid the noises of life it has become inaudible. But you [illegible] struck—and you might as well tell me that the clock never struck the hours as that God did not strike in the hour. "The Master came and called for thee." Our life is made up of such hours. They often say, "Oh, be serious; let us be

serious! There are awful things to-morrow." Let us be serious. To every soul comes the tremendous and inexorable *Then!*

2. There are *Epochs* in an age when all things seem to call to arise and trim the lamps, and when the Bridegroom seems so near. Then there are times when events in an age seem to muster so rapidly; when "iniquity abounds" and "love waxes cold;" when voices and events seem on the air, saying, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain and may be ready to die." Then, when the age is indifferent—when its convictions are feeble—then the wise virgin will say, "Thy light was not given to be hidden under a bushel, or under a bed, but to give light to the house." Amid surrounding gloom, voices will seem to mark the epoch and to give the call. A period of religious excitement will call to a wise use of opportunity, and new impulses will be awakened, old impulses will be revived, new schemes for usefulness will be attempted, new determinations to glorify the Redeemer will be formed; and it is beautiful when without the darker aspect of the parable. Such a moment dawns, and of the Church it may be said, "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps."

3. Healthiest lives need warning. They arose—they all arose—I notice, then, that holiest souls [illegible] once, and must use means. They arose—they were [illegible] the Bridegroom; they all passed for a professing [illegible] their love to the Bridegroom; they were all called [illegible]

Ah! how little is implied in that profession—[illegible] good and the bad;" "the field held the tares and the wh[illegible] not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" How li[illegible] plied in professions. "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy [illegible] cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works; a[illegible] then will I profess unto them I never knew you?" "Lord, Thou hast taught in our streets." "I never knew you." Not what I say, but what I am, is my security. Does the lamp burn over my altar night and day? Have I constant fear in myself and a constant trust in Him whom I seek? What words are those of Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 10, 11)? "But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the priests, which minister unto the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: and they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense:

the shew bread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof: to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God." Here was watchfulness over the profession—surely this is most necessary—fear and awe. May we not well tremble to see our own lamp burn so faint and dim? Do you never fear for yourselves, at last? Oh, I do! Am I preaching an ascetic piety? Does the Master never wake thee at night and say, "Where is thy lamp? I gave it thee to guard, to watch the flame; see, it almost expires! What art thou doing with thy soul? thy life? Thou hast never sought to Me for oil to keep alive the flame. Thy flame is not Mine." Do you never hear the Lord saying, "Thy lamp gives no light to the house. Thou art no city set upon a hill. The light within thee is darkness. Do you never even hear the Lord saying, "Does your light shine before men? Do they see your good works? Do you lead them to glorify your Father who is in heaven?" "Repent! or else I will come to thee quickly and remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." Trim the lamp! Such calls, such seasons, are an epoch in life—the striking clock, the "then" of our history.

II. *Instrumentality.*—We are taught, however excellent an instrument a lamp may be, it is only an instrument. However excellent and necessary it may be, an instrument is only an instrument. So they arose and trimmed their lamps. The lamp is the turning point of the parable. Alas! a lamp useless! a lamp without oil! No doubt it was correctly made. We may conceive all the lamps to be alike in this. But for that matter, the meanest and poorest lamp and worst shaped vessel that contains a light and gives forth flame is preferable to the most elegant that gives forth none. Hence we must not build our hope for heaven on our orthodoxy, but the oil it is not in established usages. A poor Romanist may be amazed at the salvation of a heretic; and a poor Protestant may be amazed at the salvation of a Romanist. But God can and does save quite irrespective of our notions. "By grace ye are saved; through faith not of yourselves." But He saves us through the Oil and He assures us of our salvation by the Flame.

For, you see, no lamp is its own end—and the profession of Christianity is not its own end, and none of the means employed by God are their own end. Lamps are to give light, and for progress, and duty,

and comfort. And the trimming implies obtaining fresh oil, and removing clogging from the wick.

"*Their lamps.*" There is *faith. Faith is a lamp;* and yet faith may not save. It may be wanting in the love which purifies the heart, and it may be the gift of logic and not the gift of God, an intellectual apprehension and nothing more. A man may work out many principles and nothing efficiently; a lamp is for guidance; men are not saved by the lamp, nor without the lamp. Perhaps you remember how an old king of Sweden, walking on the road to Upsala, once had a long conversation with a farmer about religion, and it haunted him, for the farmer spoke of his feelings on religion with so much peace and rest and satisfaction. When the king lay on his deathbed, and his mind was disturbed, the Archbishop of Upsala came to him. "What is faith?" said the king, and the archbishop discoursed to him eloquently and logically. "Ah," said the king, "that is all very ingenious! But it is not comfortable—it is not what I want; it's nothing, after all; what I want is the farmer's faith—nothing but the farmer's faith will do for me now." The lamp of faith is only an instrument. It needs the oil; "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Therefore arise and trim the lamp.

2. There is *knowledge. Knowledge is a lamp.* It is only instrumental. Knowledge is not its own end; regarded so, "'tis all in vain;" yet I know not how souls can be saved without knowledge. "How shall they call on Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" But what knowledge? Search the intelligence! Yes! Give attendance to reading, fathom the seas and shores of thought, coast round the islands of investigation, climb the observatory of science, history—use every learning, every lore. I see them like the tents pitched without the Shekinah, near to the Tabernacle, while it rests in the desert, beneath the silver stars: but what are they all for in the minister's hands? To aid the empire of science? Verily no! To search the conscience by them all, but only to say in all the knowledge and all the investigations, "I am determined to know nothing among you save Christ and Him—crucified." Knowledge! Lamp of the ages, observatory of the nations, the torch waving its fire over the race to light it on. Your knowledge pierces the recesses of self, it cannot be a statement coldly shining like a distant beam; it reaches inner [illegible]

ness. Have you any knowledge of which you can really say We know! —knowledge like the Law of the Lord or some other antediluvian creature, knowledge like that I have of a mummy, an hieroglyph on a Rossetta stone, knowledge of a clime I have never seen, of a distant planet or constellation? This will not do, this is all an oilless lamp—a romance about Jesus of Nazareth will not do; I must know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. A creed about Christianity will not do. A philosophy of Christianity will not do. Deeper, deeper—"I know whom I have believed." Oh, be ye sure of this, for there is much of the other, and it is oilless. This knowledge lives—is part of the very being; therefore arise and trim this lamp.

3. There is *experience. Experience is a lamp.* But it needs the oil. Not what I have passed through can avail for me, not my frames and feelings, but what these are before God. Experience gives a mild but vivid and helpful light. What has been done in us, for us? And then, in the earnest of His Spirit, What is the best experience if it is not softened and blessed by this? This is especially the Spirit's flame. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One." "He shall bring all things to your remembrance"—"the Comforter." This is the light within. It is the fountain of all discoveries of our own need, and of the ways and means of Divine grace. It is inner strength. "I can do all things, for Christ strengtheneth me." It is the faithful and true witness. It has given courage to martyrs. It gives power to Christian workers. It is enthusiasm. It is the zeal of the Lord of Hosts. It inspires to labor; for it is not human. "The Lord God in the midst is mighty." What is experience without it? It has no evidence. Cold, dead—a memory without a light or flower. Therefore do you trim this lamp. Arise and trim the lamps. Every lamp is to hold oil. Every lamp should give flame. The flame is for illumination and evidence. Have you an unction from the Holy One? Have you known, and have you received the fruits of the Spirit? These are true evidences. Every believer has light within light, which is assurance to him. Should Christians walk as "those who are in darkness and have no light?" The wise took oil, and oil gives flame—and flame is light. Is your religion a comfort to you? No! Then I fear it is not a light to you. We ought all to have our evidence—light more or less bright and clear. But all depends on

the lamp. Blessed state his who carries his lamp with him. As the Master said, "His loins girt, and his lamp burning." So devotion flows through the heart, and lends the luster to the life. Arise and trim the lamp.

III. Then, again, notice—every privilege brings duties; to every necessary act there is a *Responsibility*. "They all arose and trimmed their lamps;" they had all slept. "Beloved," says the apostle, "let us not sleep as do others; let us watch." From few things are we more in danger than from sleep. Realize this sleep. There is a state of the soul, spiritually so called. It is when we fall into the arms of indifference and carelessness; it is when the too fatal rest calls us, when spirits tempt us with their unhallowed opiates. "They all slept." There is danger, then, for each of us: to sleep in the lighthouse, to sleep on the top of the mast, to sleep in the room when the flames are round the house, to sleep in the sentry-box when the vigilant and besieging enemy is at the gates. Can this be wise? And this is what I mean by the state of sleep, the inactive and inert will; often the understanding wakes while all the affections sleep. I speak to your understanding that you may arouse your inert and sleeping will; but I often feel it is with us as when we sleep in our bed; the body sleeps, but the mind—well, the mind walks abroad, and dilates in dreams; but, for all that, we say the man sleeps. What is his dream-life to him? He does not know the evils around him. Infection may walk there—he perceives it not, murder, robbery, may sit upon the bed—he perceives them not; and even so with men. See, my friend, he indulges in pretty speculations; his understanding disports itself in poems and in paintings; but they have no practical power over his life, for his will is not awake, his understanding is not awake, his conscience sleeps; all that makes the man—sleeps. His imagination plays like a spirit blowing soap-bubbles in dreams, or like a lamp over a bed-head where the sleeper lies. "Vain are our fancies," etc., etc. We awaken a man through the intelligence of the sense; and thus I would hope to startle and awaken some by a voice that shall pierce to the understanding and so call up the soul. Many men are only like an illuminated temple or cathedral—the imagination suspends lamps there. But all is cold, dead, and even the dead are there beneath the tombs.

Again, I say, as they all arose, I notice that holiest souls have fears.

use means, and need vigilance. Let no one suppose he is in a state of security because he knows no fear. They all slumbered and slept, but they all arose. Man is said to arise when his will is affected by eternal good, as he is said to descend when he is influenced only in his will by the thought of temporal good. They arose—"I will arise, and go to my Father."

I do, indeed, notice that they all slept; but even in that case there must have been a difference. The rest in the unwise, the proof of folly, may be, in the wise, the proof of wisdom. They rest. They had toiled, and they were wise; and alas! some rest and sleep, even by the sick and by the dead, as the mother or nurse trims her night-light, or puts it out, while she folds her lids, and almost watches with closed eyes in the darkened room. The foolish were resting, and trusting in the morning, or in a dark lamp without oil; the wise virgins slept, but their lamp was kindled as a night-light placed by their bedside for fear of the night. They watched for their Lord. Yet, I say, it seems strange they should have slept; that all should sleep. Strange, we think, for a sleeping world, that so long a time should elapse between the publication of the Gospel Dispensation and the final appearance of Christ in Glory. The evil servant, in that case, says, "My Lord delayed His coming;" and men go to and fro, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?—all things continue as they were from the beginning:" and then in that day it is that "the Kingdom of Heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom, and yet they all slumbered and slept."

Ah, that sleep! Sleep the siren—the dread nepenthe of the soul. So Sisera slept, and the nail was driven through his skull, through his brain. So Samson slept, and the locks were shorn, and he only wakes to weakness, to blindness, to despair. So slept the old world, while for one hundred and twenty years Noah preached repentance, till the flood came and swept them all away. They all slumbered and slept.

Therefore, let us trim our lamps—let us go from analysis to duty. Consideration calls, and discretion, Is it wisdom to allow the night to steal over us, over our city and over our life, and not to trim the lamp?

Consider the time—how brief. We have no time to sleep. Consider; what did Christ think of time and life and of souls? Think what was his estimate, and He of all beings best fitted to know. Consider: He

thought so infinitely of all these things, that for us He gave the infinite sacrifice. Stand by the Cross. Stand by His life and try to realize the immense weight and worth of the moment. The heart beats eternity in its every pulsation, and still you sleep. You sleep while all-pitying angels and heavens watch over you; you sleep amid the tears of parents, the grief of friends, the temptations of devils. You sleep. Arise and trim your lamps! Consider yourselves. You have a lamp to trim—a soul, a faith. Immortality is intrusted to you. What vigilance is needed? Watch; consider. In every other department of life you are awake. Here you sleep. You do not sleep while business considerations call you; you do not sleep while fame and ambition call; you do not sleep while intellectual enterprises call you. You are awake then, and all your powers are awake. But now and here, think, consider; it is immortal destiny. It is eternal life; it is eternal life. And here you sleep on. If other interests were treated thus, should we not have a bankrupt world? Arise and trim your lamps. Consider, you have character, you have personality, individuality—these have not been given for slumber. Wake, consider! If you have knowledge, what is it without the life of knowledge? If you have faith toward God, what avails it without love towards Him? And if you have speculated on religion, of what use is it without the practice of it? Awake and trim your lamps. If you exercised your thoughts on religion, I pray you also seek the Holy Spirit to influence your will; will you remain unpurified, unconverted—will you not be saved? Consider the Word of God. Consider the plan of salvation; of Divine grace. Consider the danger of error, of declension. Consider there is no salvation independent of repentance, and obedience and reformation and regeneration. Arise and trim your lamps! Let us pray that we may arise in our affections and emotions. Let us pray that we may trim our lamps, and that if we are converted we may strengthen our brethren.

But see! the foolish ones reappear. They have kindled a feeble flame which the first gust of the cold night wind blows away. They hurry along through the streets, with garments floating wildly in disarray—for the robe was left behind, too—and all things are becoming more spectral, and tones and airs are floating around the city. "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." "Make ready for your full reward. Go forth with joy to meet your Lord."

The palace of the Bridegroom lies over the river yet, up the steep towers of the cliff, over the moated river. But see! the wise virgins have crossed the river; they are mounting to the gateway, chanting as they rise—

> Upstarting at the midnight cry:
> "Behold your heavenly Bridegroom nigh!"

And, lo! a flutter of garments, a wave of light, they "have entered in through the gates into the city;" "they have a right to the tree of life;" "the doors are shut;" "they walk with Him in white."

Ah, me! Whither shall the foolish virgins fly? Sad state! sad state! Souls walking in darkness! What can they do? The poor rushlight lamps are extinguished quite; up and on strenuously they press over the river to the gates, and there they stand. "Open to us!" "Open to us!" Hark! within the music:

> Make ready for your full reward:
> Go forth with joy to meet your Lord.

"Open to us." "Open to us!" "I never knew you." "Open to us!" "Open to us!" "I never knew you." And see—behold the city is on fire! "For it is even of the day of our death that the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and all that therein is," and all is passing away. Hark! the music. "It is the watchman on the walls." Arise and trim your lamps. "Make ready for your full reward."

Therefore, arise and trim your lamps. In that hour "Blessed are they that do His Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and enter in through the gates into the city."

WHAT MAKES LIFE WORTH LIVING?

BY THE REV. W. HAY AITKEN, M. A.

Preached in Trinity Church, New York, during the recent Mission.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.—ROMANS viii. 28.

WHAT makes life worth living? We came to the conclusion yesterday that, in order for life to be worth living, it needs to be in its essence eternal. We are not in the habit of bestowing much pains upon that which is merely temporary in its character. Temporary structures are usually flimsy. We take pains and care with that which is regarded as likely to be permanent. We shall contrive to get through successes or other, all of us; some with pain and trouble, and some with comparative ease. Some after many failures; some after apparent successes. What matters it, so long as we get through? unless, indeed, the present is connected with a mysterious future, and the life that we live, limited and insufficient as it seems, is to lead up to the limitless and eternal.

Of such a life, however, we can know nothing, except by direct revelation. Men may speculate about immortality; the grandeur and dignity of our nature may impress us with the conviction that we are designed for other things than this perishable world. But this is only a conjecture. At least, it can be but little more. The clear light upon this most mysterious subject has come to us from the great light-giver, and here it is clear and distinct. If there is one thing more explicitly revealed than another, from end to end of the New Testament, it is that the primary object of Jesus Christ was to bring life and immortality to light, and the offer which He makes to all who hearken to His voice is the offer of eternal life. When this has been assured, we are in a position to realize the value of life, and realizing its value, to endeavor to make the best of it. What, then, are the features of life that render it worth living? And under what conditions does it become so? Perhaps

nence is insufficient. On the contrary, the very idea of permanence involves the greatest terror, unless, as there be, along with permanence, other features and characteristics corresponding to our idea of what a life should be. Permanence of existence would be not only no boon, but the greatest possible curse, unless the conditions of our existence are such as to minister to our enjoyment, and to insure our advantage.

We will lay it down, then, that, in order to make life really worth living, from a Christian standpoint, it is necessary that there should be established four distinct harmonies between man and other beings or objects with which he necessarily has to do. Just as the four notes of the perfect chord are required in music to make our harmony complete, do these four great harmonies of life seem necessary, if our life is to be otherwise than discordant.

First. Man requires to be in harmony with his God.

Second. Man needs to be in harmony with nature.

Third. Man needs to be in harmony with all that is best and truest in his fellow-man.

Fourth. Man needs to be in harmony with himself. That is to say, each particular element in his nature should occupy its own proper relation to every other element, and to his nature as a whole.

Let me speak to you first of the necessity of this primal harmony between the man and his God.

It is of little use to persuade myself that there is a God unless I know something about my relations to Him. Clearly, I can derive but little consolation from the conviction that He exists, unless I am satisfied that He exists as my Friend, and is really on my side. "If God be for us," exclaimed St Paul, "who can be against us?" What a thought is this: "If God be for us;" but is He for us? But what if the idea of the ancient Greek should be realized, who thought of God as always envious of human happiness. What if the horrid Oriental dream of deity should prove true, and God should prove a foe instead of a friend? More terrible, still: what, if the idea which from early infancy we have entertained of God, be the true one, that He is just and holy and righteous, and that, therefore, just because He is so, He must needs stand opposed to one who, like myself, feels the burden and the guilt of sin? If God be for us! Yes, every thing must turn upon that. For, if God be against us, where am I to look for a friend? Frail and feeble crea-

ture of a day, arrayed against omnipotence, what chance have I, what hope, what prospect, but despair? Better that I could persuade myself that He did not exist at all; better, so far as I am concerned, that He should never exist—it, indeed, that were possible, than that He should exist as my enemy. But can He be my enemy? I have been taught to think of Him as my Father; and does not this in itself answer the inquiry and settle the question? Does it not follow from this that He must be for me? My brethren, it does, and yet it does not. For there are two relations in which God stands to man. He is my Father, inasmuch as we have all proceeded from Him; but He is also the Sovereign of the Universe, the center of all authority, the source of eternal law. In that He is my Father, He must be for me; for a father will surely be on the side of his children.

But in that He is the Ruler of the Universe, He must maintain the majesty of His own laws; and if I am a rebel against those laws, and if my life has been in constant opposition to His will, it follows as a necessity that He must needs occupy a position of antagonism; and in this respect God can not be for me so long as my heart is alienated from Him, as long as I am a rebel against His authority. And while this state of things lasted, the thought of God, so far from causing peace, could only awaken feelings of misgiving and terror. Even my theological convictions of His existence and of His character, fail to make my life any more worth living. What is the first thing needful, then, in order to compass and bring about the harmony between man and God? Brethren, we have our answer in the Cross. Jesus Christ died not to induce the Father to be at peace with us, but to express to us the Father's desire for peace, and to bring us to accept it on His own terms. The Cross is the meeting-place between God and man. And it is possible for God and man to meet there, because, in that supreme event, the righteous judgment of God against human sin has been exhibited. The majesty of the law has been vindicated, and, therefore, it becomes possible for God to yield to his Fatherly desires, and receive the guilty sinner into the embrace of His love, without compromising His position as the Sovereign Ruler of all, and the Vindicator of the sacredness of the laws which He Himself established.

Brothers, are you at peace with God? You can not make your peace, but peace has been made for you. Have you accepted the conditions

of peace? Have you directed your gaze toward the cross of Calvary, until you have seen your life-long rebellion crucified there in the person of Him who represents the sin of the world? Are you content to leave it there? Are you willing that from this time forth the revolt of a life-time should end, and God should claim and find His own in you?

I spoke to you in a previous lecture of the blessedness of peace within. There is no such thing as peace within until there is peace without. Peace between the soul and God is the condition of peace within the human soul. Until that peace is established the terrible words of the prophet must still remain true. The wicked—and, mark you, all are wicked who have not yet made their submission to God, and whose lives, in this respect, are one long sin—the wicked are like the troubled sea. There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked.

Shall we to-day take Jesus Christ for our peace? Brethren, let me plead with you, as an ambassador of God, seeking you in Christ's stead, let me beseech you this day, be ye reconciled to God, for God is reconciled to you. Then shall your life indeed begin to be worth living.

Let us pass on to consider the second of these two harmonies, and I want to point out to you that it necessarily flows from the first. * * * If my life is to be worth living, I want to be in harmony with Nature. * * * It can not be denied that so long as things are wrong between me and God, I am out of harmony with Nature. * * * The conditions of my physical existence do not tally with my aspirations and needs; and, as I have already endeavored to show, I am the victim of chronic disappointment. The forces of Nature seem to be unfriendly, the law of Nature cruel and heartless. I find myself a waif, astray in the vast ocean of time, drifting I know not where, without an object, without a hope, tossed from one troublous wave to another, unsettled, weary and restless. To me, under such circumstances, the universe seems one vast machine, under whose ruthless mechanism victims are continually being crushed. And, at any moment, those walls may crush me, as they have crushed so many of my friends and acquaintances. The more my mind becomes imbued with the invariability of natural law, the regularity and precision with which Nature pursues her own fateful course, regardless of the anguish of breaking hearts, the tears and lamentations of an "ill-used race of men," whom she calls into existence, flatters for a few moments with

false hopes, and then relegates to their native dust, the more wretched does my plight become. Nature seems to be merciful to the animal; pitiless to the man. She gives the brute what he needs; she bids the man be satisfied with the portion of the brute. And yet he can not. Apart from God and my conscious enjoyment of peace with Him, there is nothing but stoicism, I can only bring my will to take the world as it is with whatever of resignation I may summon to my assistance, to enjoy what is to be enjoyed; but, in my heart of hearts, to curse the hard fate which makes me the victim of my own superiority to the lower forms of life with which I am surrounded.

Oh, brethren, it is a cruel, cruel world, this world of ours, when once in your thought you thrust its Maker out of it. But the moment I am at peace with God, my quarrel with Nature ceases; I see her now with a different eye; I begin to understand what previously seemed inexplicable. She is my friend and not my foe; my school mistress for eternity. The conditions of life which previously seemed so unfriendly, now bear an entirely different import, and are stamped with a different character.

I see now, through all the ages, one increasing purpose runs, and in that purpose I have my part. All the powers of nature contribute to it, even those that seem most hostile to my own happiness, and all the conditions of life favor its development, even though they may seem to be opposed to it.

Come, let us spend a few moments in considering that particular form of experience which falls to your lot as business men. Can a commercial life be really profitable to man's moral nature, or contribute to his spiritual elevation? For, let me say in passing, that a commercial life is, after all, the outcome of natural conditions, although it may seem so artificial. It is a natural law that man should live by labor, and that, from the combination of our energies, the wealth of social life should grow. Labor is a law of man's nature, and, therefore, it is a law of Nature at large, of Nature herself. The combination is necessary for the proper working out of the law of labor, and therefore all the complex mechanism of commercial and social life may be regarded, in spite of all appearance to the contrary, as the product of natural laws. Now the question is: Is the operation of these natural laws necessarily unfavorable to our higher development? May even a

business life work together, with other things, for the moral and spiritual good of many of us? I know that it is difficult for many of you to think that this is so, and, believe me, I deeply sympathize with you in the special trials and difficulties which fall to your lot in commercial life. But, is any kind of life or form of experience free from special trials and difficulties? I know it is a common thing for men of business to have it in their minds that it would be very much easier to lead a true and pure and holy life, if they could only escape from the detractions and excitements of their daily toil. * * * "It is all very well for you parsons," a business man may be heard to say. "You have no temptations. You have nothing to do but to preach and to pray. You are not exposed to the turmoil of our busy lives, and you can not understand, under such circumstances as ours, how difficult it is for us to be what we ought to be."

Well, I dare say that is perfectly true; it is difficult for any of us to enter altogether into the circumstances and trials which belong to others. Are you quite sure, my dear brethren, that you are able to understand and to do justice to the temptations and trials of a parson's life? If you imagine that a parson enjoys a monopoly of immunity from temptation, I beg leave to tell you that you never made a greater mistake. Let me say it as strongly as I can say it. No human being, whatever his position in life or society, can be packed safely in a bandbox, and sent to heaven by express.

Just reflect a moment, that you may the better understand some of the difficulties and trials and temptations of a parson's life. Is there no danger of inordinate conceit and self-sufficiency where our ministerial career is crowned with unusual success? Is there any position in which a man is more exposed to the dangers arising from flattery or popularity, or, on the other hand, if he fails, is more liable to depression, and even despair.

Is it always easy to speak the truth plainly when you know it will give offense? Is there no temptation to grind off its edge in order to suit the sensibilities of important members of your congregation? Try and put yourself in the position of a clergyman who feels strongly on the temperance question, and mourns over the wholesale destruction of his flock by the public houses of the neighborhood, and who is supported liberally in all his parochial churches and organizations by a

wealthy brewer, who sits a few seats from the pulpit. Is there no danger of his being disposed to tone down the severity of his utterances on the temperance question, for fear he should offend the owner of the public houses, who are scattering death and destruction broadcast among his flock?

I do not deny that you have special and very severe temptations; but for what purpose are they permitted? If all is well, my brother, between you and God, then these very temptations are part of the "all things" that work together for your good. It would seem that human character can only be properly developed by the antagonism of evil. It is temptation that would seem to be the appointed means of strengthening our manhood, developing its higher qualities, and thus preparing for the glories of our ultimate position. Without temptation we might, indeed, be innocent; but could we ever become Divine? He who, in the strength of God, has met temptation and overcome it, who has felt its power only to be led to appropriate a higher power, and who has learned the reality of the power of the Divine by the very severity of his conflict with evil—such a man is already a noble specimen of the race, and nobler far than he could have been if he had been brought up in a spiritual glass-house, and sheltered carefully from every unkindly blast. Yes, thank God, even the temptations of business life may be brought among the all things that work together for our good.

And what shall we say of daily toil, so inseparable from our condition here, that daily toil which seems one of the standing peculiarities of man's experience as contrasted with that of the lower animals? So long as you are out of peace with God, this may, indeed, contribute, as we have seen, to render life the less worth living.

But, so long as all is well between me and God, I will have to thank him for that labor which otherwise must mean so much drudgery and aimless hardship. I know not what blessed occupation may be in store for me in higher worlds; but I can not bring myself to believe in an eternal idleness and uselessness. If we are to be united in that higher state of being with God Himself, who is the center of all activity, the Master-workman of the universe, surely we, too, are destined for happy, holy, restful toil in the vast ages which are to be. For this I love to think. I have been trained and educated by the activities of to-day.

It is well that I should learn to use my faculties, and to use them skillfully and well—well that I should be able to practice self-control, and rise above all disposition toward natural indolence and inertia. I have an end before me worthy of my toil. This, in itself, turns toil into a blessing and makes it sacred.

Brothers, let me ask you is your commercial life to you a blessing, or is it a curse? One or the other, to a greater or less extent, it is almost sure to be.

The self-same occupation, the self-same familiarity with toil and care, may make one man something greater than an angel, while it degrades another into a mere money-grubbing machine. Take your commercial life as a part of your education for eternity, and, in all your ups and downs, it shall work still for your good. Take your commercial life as an end in itself, and prosperity shall [illegible] you higher manhood, and adversity the loss of all things.

Do I speak to any here who are having to look failure in the face? and who have felt their lives embittered by the cares that have oppressed them, and the disappointments that have overtaken them? How shall this be remedied; how shall you arise from your commercial trials to higher and better things? Oh, my brother, first make sure that there is peace between thee and God. Perhaps these very trials may be designed by Him to bring thee to this point.

There is a controversy between Him and thee. Thou hast been living for thyself, whereas He would have thee live for Him, and He has had to smite thy gourd, and blight thy hopes and mar thy prospect, just that thou mightest be less in love with earth and more disposed to listen to the voice of heaven. Oh, listen to that voice to-day. Peace! Peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near; and I will heal him. Let there be peace between thee and God, and then thou shalt find that there is no longer room for bitter thoughts and resentful feelings and morose reflections upon the inequality of fortune. You take the little God has given you thankfully and find in it a means of the fulfillment of the Divine will, a contribution to thy own truest and highest well-being. All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to His purpose. Brethren, is thy life in the lines of Divine purpose; is it a contribution to that great purpose which binds the ages together in their wondrous unity? If it be

then all is well, whatever seems. O, wondrous optimism. You have nothing to fear. Go forth and do the right with a brave heart and a firm step. God is thy shield, God is thy portion, and God thy everlasting reward.

Of the other two harmonies, time will not permit me now to speak. I may have an opportunity of doing so on a future occasion. I will take my leave of you to-day while the question suggested by our text is still ringing in our ears, and, I trust, penetrating to our hearts. Are all things working for my good? If God be for you they are; otherwise they are not. But, O, why should this be a doubtful question? This very day accept the offer of His peace, and then for time and for eternity your interests are assured.

THE ASPECT OF THE PRESENT AGE.

BY THE MOST REV. WILLIAM THOMPSON, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

Preached before the Church Congress.

PSALM CXIX, 117.
"Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe."

At every great [illegible] where prayer is offered, the sacrament of the death of Christ celebrated, and the truth of God earnestly sought, the Day of Pentecost seems to dawn again, and the presence of the Holy Spirit is [illegible]. [illegible] on the assurance of the promise of the Lord that He would be in the midst of us; given on His promise to hear holy prayers; given on account of His love, which will not see His children struggling in a fallen world without sending them consolation. It is no matter of speculation whether any such supernatural presence ought or not to be expected. If the Spirit of our God is not here, our time is wasted; our discussions useless; we have grieved Him by some fault of ours; we have driven Him from that home which He would have made with us; and a great occasion has been lost for want of Him. If ever we had occasion to resort for guidance to the Holy Throne, this is such an occasion. The trials of the Church for the next few years seem to be of a new type. We have no open persecution to fear, as when

> "Diocletian's fiery sword
> Worked, busy as the lightning.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

I suppose no age has ever been more favourable for giving what is called "fair play" to the Church. Rome, in old days, tolerated everything but Christianity. England tolerates everything. The times are peaceful, the [illegible] duties of the shepherd plain. Yet there are dangers peculiar

to the time. A mighty tide of thought is rising before us. Other tides have been like the eruption of Etna, fierce and terrible, but moving slowly, and confined in narrow space. The viscous flood of fire has wrapt round tree and homestead and made them ashes. This flood is like the tide of the great sea that penetrates every part: undermining the children's castle on the sand, and flowing into every stone of the pier, and taking invisible tribute from the cliff, so that no particle that is below sea-level can escape the contact. Such a flood of thought seems rising on the modern world: and it will leave no inch dry: and that which is soluble it is likely to dissolve, and that which is ancient and strong it will touch and test, and only that which is above the waterfloods will entirely escape its effects.

I doubt for my own part whether any former time has presaged severer tasks for the Church: I doubt whether any moment has been big with greater dangers than those of which this century is in travail. Some speak as if all changes in the world were but a change from evil to evil—from bad to worse: as if the Apostle's words—"We know that we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John v. 19)—were an account of the whole frame of creation and its working: whereas they are a contrast of the little Church of Christ with the multitude of those who still lay under the power of the devil. The progress of the world, so far as it is the development of justice, knowledge, and mutual help, is Divine: it is good, and every good and perfect gift comes and can come from one source only.

It is one of the fruits of the Reformation that the Church and State are no longer regarded as enemies, but as two distinct powers, working each for the good of man, the one in the road of civil freedom and security and happiness; and the other with the object of moral freedom, peace of mind, and eternal hope for the people of God. United as Church and State, or severed as a Church within a State, this is the purpose of the Church and the State. And we of the clergy understand that much better than we used to do: and in such subjects as encouragements to temperance, to thrift, to recreations of the people, readings, lectures, newsrooms, and the like, we step out and do our best to help the State towards law and order and civil improvement; confessing thus that the progress of civilization helps the progress of religion. Let us keep before us this idea. Science in itself is no enemy of Christ: secular culture in itself is not an enemy: civil government is no enemy: "the powers that be are ordained of God."

But at this moment, the modern spirit is making progress round us with a rapidity which the Church has not yet learned to measure. Your programme shows that this Conference knows many difficulties, and does not mean to shun them. But it is no reproach to the clergy in general if I say, uniting myself wholly with them in this matter, that within a few years changes have come over the horizon of thought which cast a shadow upon every part of the field of our teaching, which we have only just begun to discern, and which we are not prepared to grapple with. I will try to indicate some of them.

Over the remains of one of the most eminent naturalists the grave has lately closed. Whether he was the inventor of the system which bears and will bear his name, or Lamarck and Wallace claim a share, matters not to us now. He has made a complete revolution in the mode in which enquirers now regard the physical world. I do not say it ought to be so, but that it is. And my proof would be drawn, not from enthusiasm of followers, but rather from admissions of opponents, who, whilst protesting against the extravagant deductions of Darwin and his followers, admit at the same time that new light has been thrown on dark places in natural history by the new system. In rather more than twenty years it has made itself a place in the thought of all countries. Whatever truth there may be in it, it is not to be disposed of by mere denial and ridicule. If there be, in common phrase, "something in it," our business is to find that something, to set bounds to it by the truth that comes from another side, and so to disarm it of any lurking mischief. That the thinker that founded the system was an honest enquirer into the facts of nature, following where research led him, with no afterthought of the effect on religion, with no wish to shake our faith in a Creator, those who know his writings declare. That he shines more in research than in inferences from research, it is competent to us to believe. That the so-called struggle for existence is no more a complete account of the present condition of the world of nature, than a thunder storm is the cause of the river whose flood it helps by small degrees to swell, we shall see more and more clearly.

Nor must we confound these researches with the crude materialism which borrows some help from them. A new induction has been made from physical facts: its novelty has startled and distressed us. It may be criticised, revised, even superseded by other inductions, but as it was needless for the Church to urge Copernicus to revoke his astronomy, so will our child

ren see that new views of natural history cannot kill the spirit, or prevent it from turning to God for strength and comfort, or from conceiving immortal hopes. If it be true that something new has been discovered, it is for us to seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost, to teach us how and where the discovery touches the Gospel which we preach. It is for us to recall under the same guidance the truths which we have to remember from our Master. In no spirit of panic fear, but in trust on God, should we approach the new difficulty presented to us.

Some find a resource in drawing a line between two kinds of truth. Leaving nature to take care of herself, they desire only to study the moral and spiritual parts of man, and to work on these, with the message of forgiveness and of eternal life. But apart from the fact that God is the God of nature as of grace, you will find that it is impossible to maintain this separation, for the confines of it are already assailed. Attempts are made to apply the new theories to morality, as to all else that concerns man. The last theory is that mankind, struggling upward from unexplored depths of being, and fighting fiercely for survival in a world too narrow, finds the needs of social ties, to reinforce the single hand with allies for the struggle: that society develops sympathy, and that sympathy, ever increasing, tempers and will finally subdue selfishness and the grasping instincts and desires. The sense of right and wrong, therefore, is the result of the opinion of society acting on our minds, and it is needless to seek any higher sanctions. That view of life would indeed be fatal to our work. And it is useless to deny that under the form of utilitarian morality, or of the morals of evolution, it leavens the popular belief far and wide. It is not all new. Since the days of Bentham, it has found special favour in England: there is a spurious practical character about it, that suits our temper. We ought so to act to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number of men.

But this is to put calculation for duty. What is happiness? What will procure it? Does it matter one way or the other to the general happiness if one or two shall indulge their private vices? Can men not so regulate their vices that they may even benefit the general body? There are good answers to all these questions; but they cannot be drawn from this philosophy. And they are questions which are put, and in the hour of temptation, just when an imperative rule and order are most needed. We need not long-drawn calculations to give us strength; we need "Thou

shalt," and "Thou shalt not," from some higher sphere. Natural science cannot speak them. "The divine is heard," to quote the words of Professor Müller, "in the 'I ought,' which nature does not know and cannot teach. Everything in nature is or is not, is necessary or contingent, true or false. There is no room in nature for the 'I ought,' as little as there is in logic or geometry."* No natural inference can be higher than nature herself. Such a system of morals as this, made out of man's ingenuity, is alterable by man. We know the wood of which this idol is made; it grew with us: we have warmed ourselves and cooked by it: it is hard if we cannot alter the form of it, which we have made after the figure of a man, into some shape that we think more beautiful and convenient.† Cases can be conceived in which this kind of right and wrong change places. It might be used to justify parricide in the story of the Cenci. It is used to justify foul murders in Russia and in Ireland. General utility would be promoted by some system; and therefore it is lawful to remove a living obstacle from the paths of that system; lawful, were there not an awful voice, "Thou shalt not kill." Do not sacrifice thyself and thy precious life at the call of duty, this system says to the missionary, to the explorer, to the doctor in the plague time, to the soldier in the battle; it is for the general good that precious lives should be preserved. And if Christ had considered His life precious, a world would have gone unsaved. True morality speaks to us from Sinai; from the Sermon on the Mount; from the suffering Saviour's call—"Deny thyself; take up thy cross, and follow Me;" and the power of it lies in our inner conviction, that He who thus speaks has a right over us; that what He utters is not a result of nice calculation, but an eternal law; that that law is the law of God.

It is no new thing to the Church that the world teems with misery. She has never shrunk from the duty of bringing it succour; and whatever may be said about the shortcomings of the present time, no one can deny that its charity is open-handed, far-seeking, and enlightened. Seeing that much of the sorrow that is in the world comes from those who suffer by their own acts, she tries to teach temperance, and thrift, and industry, and with growing success. But what can we say of that great mass of misery that cannot thus be reached? Trade will rise and fall: there must be labour enough for its highest level, and for every lowering of the level

* Preface to Kant's "Critique."

† Cf. Isaiah xliv. 13.

some must be displaced. In great depressions, famine and fever are the inevitable results; even in the small, the children cry for bread, and homes break up, and the worker's hand grows weaker. One of the workers told us lately, that even the employed labourer suffers from hunger from one week to another, and perhaps the wife and children suffer more. It is true to say that some of this is the man's own fault; but how does that improve it? If I see the misery, I grieve for that; if a fault caused the misery, then I grieve for the fault and the misery. We could bear to look on this if we thought it a time of discipline, to be followed by a time of peace and comfort; we could even be content in it if those who suffer could partly be helped through the evil day, and partly were sustained by the hope of a life where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. But when men go about among them and point to this condition as a proof that there is no Divine government at all, when those who suffer most are most tempted to quit their one consolation, there seems only one refuge from despair. God is not the author of evil. He is the sender of succour to it. We have not yet come near the boundaries of succour, and we know not how much may still be removed from society by Christian pains. All we have to do is to recognise the immense mass of trouble and sorrow, and to urge every one who loves Christ to do his part in its relief. We belong to Him, to whom "at even when the sun did set they brought all that were diseased and them that were possessed with devils, and He healed them." The love of Christ shall thus have its perfect work, its fullest scope through us that believe on Him, and who can yet tell how many of the evils which now threaten a fuller social life may not be removed by that exceeding love?

One more feature of the modern movement cannot be omitted. The Reformation vindicated for men their right to betake themselves to God and to Christ directly, for forgiveness and for peace, without the interposition or hindrance of any human power. It did not seek to change the constitution of the Church. Melancthon writes, "Would that it were possible not to confirm and strengthen episcopal domination, but to restore episcopal administration." Nor was it a democratic movement, as some have represented it. The history of this country bears witness to that. But now, in all European countries, there is a stirring of the people towards democracy which cannot be overlooked. The theory of universal brotherhood and equality, which Christianity founded in a common origin of man

and a common interest in redemption, now gathers strength on all sides from the ideal, so men phrase it, of human nature, and its claims of justice. The Christian idea is examined and dismissed by modern philosophy because it rests on motives external to and above man, on redemption and the love of God. The equality of man shall rest for modern society on justice and the nature of man. On which it may be remarked that if Christianity appears to be mystic and transcendental in its theory to some people, it has done a great deal more practical work in the direction of freedom and equality than any other system with like aim: for we owe it hospitals, our educational system, the abolition of slavery, recognition of women's rights and worth, missions to savage peoples. And if these blessings come slowly, it is sufficient for my purpose now that they have come; whilst the other system, by which the work of emancipation is to be done, is only beginning to wake. It woke for the French Revolution, which upon the text of liberty preached terror, judicial murder, universal war, a tyranny, and thousands slain in battle. It will wake, and, with spasmodic efforts, will aim at new forms of government, at new rights in the land, even at new forms of distributing all property. With what issues, no man would dare to say.

Can the Church be indifferent to such a movement? It is a kind of parody on her own laws. Love one another, was the new commandment for the new brotherhood of the cross: Do to men as thou wouldest have them do to thee, is an epitome of the Divine law of our dealings with men. The new doctrine may be the Church's opportunity. She cannot turn away from it as mere politics.

Such are some of the problems with which the Church of the coming generation will have to deal. They are hard, but they are not impossible for it. Let us not commit the mistake, which is so common, of thinking that the worst of all ages is our age, which means only this, that we live in this age and have not been called on to live in another. When you that are young shall have lived your life, and shall be looking to the future, like some of us, with a disinterested eye, as on a conflict which you shall not share, troubles even greater than the present may seem to blacken on your horizon. But will our present methods and conduct be sufficient for all the troubles that we foresee? Few of us will think so. Oh that the time past may have sufficed us for our squabbles and our littleness! Oh that the hosts

that rise and murmur at our gates, [illegible] and wealth and power, may find us watching, duly instructed, ready to meet them in the gate with answers to their demands! For this we need a learned and thoughtful clergy, a [illegible] deeper love of order, less spirit of [illegible] for those without, a far more devoted zeal.

But I am speaking as if our power to [illegible] development of new qualities in us. Our position is that you cannot account for the creation, that you cannot offer men a binding moral law, that you cannot comfort them in the depth of their distress, that you cannot hope to guide their [illegible] by the doctrine of a Creator, of a Redeemer, of a Divine Spirit working in and with the soul. Upon this the Church of God must stand or fall; we are agreed on that point. I can but offer a hint or two to guide thoughts that are already in your minds.

Upon the subject of the origin of things, natural history brings no light. She does not pretend to [illegible] end. Supposing material particles once in existence, she cannot tell why they have moved in a marvellous progression, rather than in an endless circle of chaotic disorder. What is there in matter, living or inert, to account for its tending towards a world of beauty, towards Newton and Shakespeare, rather than towards an endless round of slime or fiery mists? Nay; if the higher stages of creation not only surpass, but also in a sense contradict the lower, natural history cannot tell us why. "Change from unchangeable matter, death from the imperishable, motion from absolute rest, life from the dead, sense from the senseless, purpose from [illegible] spirit from the unspiritual,"—such are the contradictions which, according to Hoffman, the materialist must accept. The properties of matter, living or dead, are unequal to account for such transformations. To endow the atom with such informing power is to make an idol of it; to escape from the idea of a creation we make our idol create. Materialism explains nothing; it leaves [illegible] upon the splendour of the world, upon the [illegible] sea in its might, upon the deep perspective of the stars—

> "Those stars whose steps are worlds, above and under,
> Glory on glory, wonder upon wonder"

—the little atom and its little doings will not content us. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." You will not eradicate this view of creation, for we that think it are a part of the creation, and the consciousness of a Father's power comes to us as a birthright, and beats in the pulses of our blood. Our faith in our Heavenly Father does not depend on our interpretations of portions of the Divine records; we have modified that interpretation as we understood astronomy and geology better in past times. We have accepted the new explanation, and have perhaps confessed that we had wrongly expected a treatise on science in the Book of God's dealings with men. And still the Father looks upon His children, and they answer when He says, "All those things hath My hand made." Is it otherwise in the field of morals? It is not. There is the same kind of contradiction between premises and conclusion in modern teaching. "Natural selection," says an able writer, "is hate and war: charity is love and peace. If natural selection is the only law of progress; if warfare alone has brought forth the first virtues, and created nations; if man has not in his reason and in his heart a principle of justice and goodness of which natural theories take no account, destroyed some day to destroy war itself for evermore, the more intelligent and better armed races will be bound, on pain of failing in their mission of progress, to enslave the interior races." Suspect that substitute for "justice" love with its new name of Altruism, and the sword-hilt peeping from under the pilgrim's dress. No doubt social progress has restrained selfishness. Men have had to lop off this and that indulgence, upon a fair compact with society that on such terms the rest of their comforts shall be left them. It even leads men to make charitable gifts, and support good institutions. But its power is very limited. The miser, the sensualist, the slothful, may still indulge their sin, and satisfy the perfunctory calls of social life. Lovest thou Me? Love one another. These words come from another region; and their power is great still. "The love of Christ constraineth us" to love as he loves. Love is a new and principle in the soul, which will spread over all the soil in which it grows, and will overpower the lower growths and possess the whole soul. Let the Church still proclaim, with voice clear as a trumpet call, the mys-

tery of the Redeemer's love. It still has power to rise and to transform. In this revival meeting, in that wild march of a Salvation Army, it is this message, or it is nothing, which stirs the human spirit. We may not like the methods; we may desire greater order and less emotion; but the message of the Cross stirs men. We may shake our heads, and say it will not last: as if Church history from the first had not contained a sad chapter about the lapsed—the men whose faith did not last. In some the seed will die, and in some the seed will grow and last; but it has Divine life, or it would not grow in any. Christ, God and Man, is a law and a life to men, because He is their Benefactor, and has given them life from the dead: and their conscience knows, or is ready to know it.

Credit this, O Church beloved of Christ, dwelt in by the Holy Spirit; the people that sit in sorrow need but to know what you desire to tell them to look on Jesus, and to love Him; that he is still travelling among them in the greatness of His strength, and mighty to save. Tell them that Christ is their best Example and their dearest Friend. He can unfasten from their backs the "strangling load" of sin, and launch them, free men in a course of highest duties: can give strength for labour, and sickness, and loss of friends. The promises that society will grow unselfish by degrees are easy to make; they are drafts on a future civilization payable a thousand years after date. Christ is here, and now. Take Him into your heart, and He is yours to-day; and by to-morrow He will have begun to change your life. Be it ours to bring Jesus Christ more directly before the conscience of the people. The story of His life draws all men unto Him. Those who have seen Him have seen the Father: for they can realize a Father's love, by the help of a life of love lived by One who dwelt amongst men as one of themselves. His life is in itself a refutation of the theory of duty evolved from society and civilization. When the Jew's heart was faint with the failure of promises, and the Gentile's heart was sated and disgusted with sinful indulgence, then started out of that soil the fairest lily of a holiest life, the subject of the world's wonder ever since. Not from the stony ground of Judaism, not from the foul fatness of bloated heathenism, did this flower spring. It did not, and it could not. Here, eighteen hundred years later, men work out, in theory, equality of man and dignity of man. There is a shorter road: learn of Him who told us centuries since that men are equal in the

sight of God, and are clothed in the dignity of redeemed children of His kingdom. A power such as no king ever wielded is His already: power over laws and customs—power over human hearts—power to bring peace and forgiveness. And the sources of it are easy to find. Man wants peace and forgiveness from sin; and Christ is felt to be the Redeemer that he seeks. The power of the Lord has been present to heal them. Man, discoursing much of many discoveries, may show us much that is new of the world and of his own nature, and we need not fear to follow it. What is false in it will pass away; what is true must harmonise with that other truth—that to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living. We shall often be perplexed and shall faint, hardly seeing the truth. But the Church of Christ is a Church of prayer and praise; and this is the sum of her worship—"Hold Thou us up, and we shall be safe."

EVIL IN THE WORLD.

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St. John xvi., pt. of vv. 6, 7.

"Sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you."

Of all the problems which present themselves to us in this age of deep doubts and questionings, none is so full of mystery as the known existence of suffering amongst the sinning and the unsinning inhabitants of the universe. The origin of evil, moral and physical, is the oldest of all perplexities, and late discoveries, physical and geological, have aggravated the difficulty of that great question—How can we account for the wide and far-reach of suffering in the creation of an almighty and all-merciful God?

If the question were not asked on all hands, so that none can have ears and never hear it, I should not moot it now. The simple and undoubting faith of childhood would be the happiest condition for youth and manhood; but as, alas! the young man must guard his moral purity against trials unknown to his infancy, so must he train his faith against troubles shut out from his early happy home.

If, again, the question had never disturbed myself, I might never have tried to answer it; but having tried to answer it for myself, though I can not hope to remove all its anxieties, if I can suggest some thoughts helping to its solution, I shall not need to apologise for speaking on it here.

Probably in our own childhood, as in the more childlike ages of Christianity, we were wont to think, that not only did the sin of our first forefathers bring death to themselves and to their posterity, but that then for the first time the death and sufferings of others were known in the animal

creation, the sin of Adam being the one source of evil to the whole world which had been subjected to his supremacy. This, of course, was mysterious: but it did not lack a light of its own. The discoveries of science in the sepulchral monuments of the earth have taught us that, from untold ages, before man was in being, there worked death, and discord, and cruelty, and agony among those sentient creatures which, so far as we can tell, had no sin that merited suffering. The existence of moral evil had puzzled even the clearest minds of old; still, given moral evil, we can see the reason of pain, both moral and physical, whether as punitive and deterrent, or disciplinary and restorative. But remove moral evil, and the problem returns in all its hazy darkness and intricacy, "How can a good Creator have made sinless suffering to be an integral portion of His work?" And so one of the most remarkable thinkers of this century has left it on record, that he "could not believe God to be all powerful and all good, unless there were an Ahriman, an *Antitheos*, a co-ater god, equally powerful and equally bad." And this Manichean solution has been craved for by many besides John Stuart Mill. Nay! so far does the difficulty reach, at present, that earnest believers in Theism, and even in Christianity, give up, as hopeless, that great argument from design which was held to be an unanswerable proof of creation, and of a Creator, from Cicero to Paley.

I shall begin by demurring to the assumption that we cannot believe in a God unless we believe Him to be absolutely omnipotent, and also all holy and all good. We may think it most likely that He would be, but I know not why we should assume that He must be. On principles of natural religion, we have only to look upon the Universe without, and into the microcosm within, and to decide whether they give proofs of a wise, skilful, and powerful Maker. If without Him we cannot account for the contrivances which meet us at every turn, if all analogy seems to say that wisdom is the attribute of a wise Being, that order and regularity require mind to direct and regulate, that law is not conceivable without reference to a Lawmaker, then we seem driven to the belief in a Creator and a Ruler of the world. If, in the main, we see that the design and the handiwork and the law conspire to the general good and happiness of those beings which are made and governed by them, we infer that the Maker and Governor is good and merciful, as well as wise and powerful. But to say how far His power extends, how vast is his wisdom, how boundless His

goodness, this is beyond all reach of observation and induction. Certainly neither natural religion nor philosophical inquiry has ever reached, nor even professed to reach, a knowledge of the infinity and absolute perfection of the supreme Governor of all. Heathen religions mostly rest satisfied with a belief in beings, perfect neither in might nor in goodness. Philosophy has only guessed, and very often despaired. Those thinkers who demand that there shall be a God (if any) absolutely and illimitably perfect in power, wisdom, and goodness, whom nothing can thwart, and who does all things according to the pleasure of His will, and that will simply and unchangeably merciful, have surely borrowed their belief from the Christian Scriptures, and only use an *argumentum ad hominem*, not sound general reasoning, when they say that we must have a God infinite in everything, or else no God at all. To me it seems reasonable to accept the general principles of Theism, if even we should be compelled to acknowledge that the work of the Creator is only approximately perfect, and that defects adhere to it, wonderful and vast as it is, either from the very fact of its vastness, or from the utter impossibility of creating good without concurrent springing up of evil. Such a Theism, imperfect and crippled though it might be, would surely be truer than an indolent and helpless acquiescence in the thought that matter, motion, and law may be in themselves eternal, and that by their unexplained and inexplicable working on each other, they have produced that universe of beauty, and harmony, and yet of mystery, the mere tracing of whose machinery has exercised all the greatest minds of successive ages, and given birth to all the science and philosophy in the world. I gladly acknowledge that Christian Theism is higher, better, and truer: but then let us remember that it is Christian Theism, and such as was never made known by the wisdom of the world.

But, if we accept this Christian Theism, and say that we must have this or none: that is, if we must have a God infinitely powerful and infinitely good, or else must fall back on Materialism or Agnosticism,—then we are bound to accept it as Christianity teaches it, and not to isolate it from all that Christianity teaches beside. We get the notion of a God infinite in power and goodness simply and solely from Christianity: let Christianity teach us how to deal with it.

Well, then, the very first thing which Christianity teaches, after its teaching of God, is the existence of sin. Is this incompatible with the ex-

istence of a mighty and merciful Creator? I believe it to be now pretty generally acknowledged that the creation of free-will, without the possibility of the abuse of freedom, is to that degree impossible, that it is a contradiction in terms. If a creature cannot do wrong, he cannot choose right in preference to wrong. And further, if a being cannot hate, it is hardly conceivable that he should really love. If, therefore, God is pleased to call into being intelligences with wills and freedom and forechoice, and if He desires to have them capable of really loving and willingly serving Him, it seems inevitable in the very nature of things that they should have the power of sinning, and even the capacity of hating good and God.

So, sin is not impossible in the higher world of a holy, mighty, loving God. And, more than this, the creation of the highest, noblest, and best of creatures, creatures capable of choosing good, capable of real holiness and anything like hearty love, involves, and cannot but involve, the possibility that those creatures should choose unholiness, and sin, and hate.

Perhaps we may go even further, and say, that for the highest perfection of the creature, it is necessary that he should not only have the free choice of good and evil, so rising to the height of excellence by refusing the evil and choosing the good; but even that he should be tempted to a mischoice by the presence of evil, so that, rising superior to temptations he may triumph in his integrity. Now, this is just what the Bible teaches us. It does not, indeed, teach us that, beside eternal God, there is an eternal, co-eternal principle of evil: but it does teach us, so far as we can read it, that the infinite Creator did from the very first, perhaps through all eternity, create beings of high intelligence, of great power, and of absolute freedom of choice, and that some of them, it may be the mightiest of them, misused their freedom, and so, whilst they continued wise and powerful, became powers of evil instead of powers of good.

Now I protest, *in limine*, against the vulgar prejudice which calls this superstition. It is not superstition, unless the only wisdom be to believe nothing but what the bodily eye can see, and what the bodily hand can feel. If there be a God it is clear that He is a Creator. If we see the vastness of His material creation without, and the wonders of His spiritual creation within, it is only reasonable to believe that He may have created still greater spiritual beings than we know ourselves to be, and that as we are conscious of our own misuse of freedom, so those greater and mightier than ourselves may have misused their freedom too. And whether we look

at the moral or at the physical world, there is much at least which looks as if plans of wisdom and greatness and goodness were, even here and there, traversed, and in part thwarted, by some counter work of malice and evil. It may seem enlightened to assign such theories as these to the dark ages. But they are at least as reasonable as the theories which attribute all the evil to the Author of all good, or which deny any difference between good and evil alike and believe only in an eternal necessity without even blind, unconscious eternal law without a lawgiver. And this is exactly the solution which we find in the Bible, most of all in the teaching of Jesus Christ and of the two disciples who most constantly companied with Him, St. James and St. Peter and St. John. And surely it is not inconsistent in us to ask, that, if physicists and philosophers will leave the God whom we believe, not only the Bible, reveals to us—*i. e.*, a God infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness—then they would accept what the Bible teaches just as fully and almost as frequently—viz., that there is a spiritual world, as well as a great physical creation, which through disorder and rebellion has gone astray from holiness, lost its own way, and, as experience teaches us of all such wanderers, having lost its own way, loves to lead others astray with it.

Now, I do not venture to affirm that this existence of a great spiritual power of evil in the universe will account for all the physical, as well as all the moral, evil that exists in it. But I think it should not wholly be dismissed as a priori unphilosophical. Or rather, it should be said at first that, even if we admit such spiritual existences, they can only account for moral evil, and can have nothing to do with physical. The spiritual and the physical have been supposed to be planes which never even intersect each other, and we cannot reason of them in any sort together. But if this objection be true, then is there no room in the universe for God nor for a human soul. If God be a spiritual Being, but yet has given life and order to the material universe; if the soul be spiritual, but yet acts on the body and so on the world without; then we cannot assume an axiomatic that spiritual beings can have no influence on that which is natural. Only pure materialism can consistently deny the possibility of intelligences, finite or infinite, existing and acting apart from bodily substances.

It may be urged, with greater show of reason, that God, the good Creator, would never suffer fallen spirits to corrupt and injure, still less to torture beings, which He had made to be painless and happy. Yet experience

and analogy, if not *à priori* reasoning, would seem to speak otherwise. What do we hear with our ears and what have our fathers taught us of things to which human senses can testify? Here, in the midst of a world for the most part happy and beautiful, we ourselves are moving, intelligent and moral beings. It is in our power to add to the happiness or to take away from and utterly destroy the happiness of numbers of sentient creatures with which we daily have to do. It is not merely that we can raise or ruin the moral character of men and women and children connected with us, a power which almost likens us with gods: but we can, and we do, make happy or make miserable the cattle in our fields and the beasts in our stalls and the many creatures which we place around our hearths and cherish in our homes. Nay! the wild birds as they fly over us, the hare and the antelope as they gambol by our paths, enjoy the immunity of our mercy or suffer from the cruelty of our appetites or our pleasures. And, whatever may be urged in favour of field sports, and of the slaying of beasts for food, we cannot be ignorant that there is the merciful and the cruel sportsman, the merciful and the merciless slaughterer. But far away from, and infinitely beyond all this, we know of sports which can be spoken of simply as fiendish (if fiends are non-existent, no word could describe them), for which men, alas! men whom some call gentlemen, have trained the savage nature of savage beasts to make them more savage, that they may inflict the greater torture each on the other. Even their natural powers of tormenting have been strengthened by providing them with powers preternatural, as when the spurs of the gamecock have been supplanted through man's ingenuity by spurs of steel, that they may the better tear the breasts and heads and eyes of the wretched beings whose instincts tempt them to fight. It cannot be contended that if such be the influence of a fiendish nature in man on the brute creations round him, no such influence can be permitted to those whose nature is, if indeed it be possible, still more fiendish, and whose power may be unspeakably mightier.

It may be dangerous to step too boldly along untrodden fields. We cannot say with certainty that in this way much that is good and beneficent in what we call nature has been dashed and darkened with evil. Still, given a great and good Creator, given a great spiritual personal power or powers of evil permitted to exist, given a Universe full of beauty and har-

mony and happiness, but ever and anon troubled with darkness and discord and suffering, then surely we seem to see cause enough for all the excellence, yet cause, but distinct cause, for all the blemishes, and we shrink from acknowledging these, not through any reverence for the mystery, but because we are ashamed of believing what is beyond the narrow ken of our own bodily sense.

Or perhaps it will be contended that recent discoveries, whatever their discoveries be, as to the unbroken unity of the animated creation, as to the principle by which successive links of being are not to be regarded but as evolved each one from the last, that these theories, perhaps, however presented in absolute unity, resulting from an unvaried law, and that even if there be no room to acknowledge that a primary impulse was perhaps once given to matter, so that evolution may not necessarily be the result of evolution, itself the cause of itself, yet there is no room for acknowledging anything from the very first, but only a constant antecedent in the law which evolves everything from things existing before. I submit that, so far from disposing of the spiritual agency which Christian Theism asserts, the theory of evolution fits wonderfully into it. There are few who will venture to maintain that nothing but evolution naturalised the when there had been merely chemical actions, and again animal life when there had been only vegetable, and who deny that evolution itself, be it what it may, had an origin somewhere; and there are few, on the other side, who will not plainly trace some law of development has been impressed by the Creator on creation, and introduced by Him into the [illegible] of created things. But then does it not accord with what we witness ourselves, that many an influence for good, natural or moral, gets somehow or other vitiated by an influence of ill? Is it not so, that a strong physical constitution gets tainted with unaccountable disease, [illegible] constitutions, but which mingles with all the life blood, destroying the individual and gradually degenerating the race? And though we may not fully explain all mysteries by using such physical analogies, does it not seem, both on general principle and from all our natural experience, that the very likeliest way for malignancy to thwart the purposes of benevolence would be by poisoning in some manner the very streams of goodness, which flow from the bounty of the All-giver? And so, while the primary being and the primary law coming from the Creator be good, and wise, and merciful, there may be, as in the moral Universe so also in the physical, room for a

counter-law, a rule of unrule, conditionary, and in part countervailing the great primal law itself.

I do not presume to think that what I have been saying now accounts for all the mystery of sentient and intelligent beings, its sorrows and its sufferings. I only say this. The physicist tells us that he finds everywhere in nature marks of evil mingled with good; especially he tells us that with the very dawn of life in the history of the world, he finds traces of suffering, and as life and feeling develop, not suffering only, but what at least in man we should call cruelty develops equally. The philosopher looks at the world of moral beings, and he, too, tells us that along the field of light there are everywhere drawn dreary streaks of darkness. Both of them exclaim, as they testify of all this, "Lo! these be thy gods, O Israel."

Now, if we had nothing to account for but the existence in some measure of pain and the extinction of individual being by death, we should not care to answer in this matter. Death may be but partially evil, and pain have beneficent purposes. But we can see, and must confess to, something more evil than mere death or mere salutary pain. And then, acknowledging all that may be learnt from science and philosophy, I maintain, that though Theism cannot, Christianity, if you take it all as it comes to us from Christ, does give at least glimpses and sometimes more than glimpses of a great world-wide and world-deep struggle between good and evil, penetrating into every corner of creation, whether moral or physical, and that it promises when the struggle shall be over, and the good finally prevail, that we shall see that it is not impossible that the supreme, eternal, almighty power of holiness and love may yet have suffered, and for wise purposes have suffered, a partial eclipse of His goodness through the influence of fallen beings whose malignity is the very counterpart of His mercy. And I am sure, that such an account of the origin of the good which we enjoy, and of the evil of which we are painfully and irresistibly conscious, is incomparably more probable and more philosophical than any mere agnosticism, which consigns everything which it most concerns us to know to the deep, dark dungeons of doubt; or than the still more senseless materialism which postulates matter, motion, and law, and because it cannot tell whence any one of them can have come, jumps to the illogical conclusion that they never came at all, but, with all their marvellous intricacies, complexities, order, and power, have had an unbegotten eternity.

But let us pass from this survey of the universe throughout, and look at the lesser world within—lesser because it is but part of the illimitable whole, but yet in itself how high and deep, and wide and broad, and multitudinous. Let us take our stand within our own souls, and see how pain and suffering affect ourselves, remembering, or at least assuming, that we are not only sentient but moral beings, that, as being moral beings, we have within us some disordered machinery, that it needs righting and restoring, and that we are here in a training-school for a home in eternity.

Now, could we do without suffering within and around us? Most of us shall agree that suffering in ourselves is, in what measure we know not, essential to our moral discipline, to our recovery from moral evil, to our high moral elevation. We learn by that we suffer. How very rarely have we known a man, through many years of life, who has not been deteriorated by the sunshine of prosperity or gone wrong in the joyous days of youth, and who has not been mellowed, and softened, and purified by suffering, or sorrow, or adversity! How needful to us all is the perfect work of patience! How onesided, stunted, half developed does the kindliest nature seem if it has never known the discipline of pain, and grief, and disappointment! This is indeed the veriest commonplace of morals and philosophy.

Yet possibly the sufferings of others are even more needful to us than sufferings in ourselves. The true human character cannot be formed without pity, and sympathy, and mercy. We might not go far wrong if we were to say that man is differenced from man more by the possession and wise exercise of these virtues and charities than by any other character or property whatever. As he possesses and cultivates and yet prudently restrains them, he rises in the scale of goodness: as he neglects them, dwarfs or loses them, he falls lower and lower, and is likened to savage natures and to spirits of evil.

But then pity, sympathy, and mercy exist only where there is misery, and if so, we can see at once why pain and sorrow are so needful in such a world as ours. In higher spheres it may be otherwise, but in our own economy we can hardly tell how any of the best affections of man could be called out if there were no pity which moves the heart to love.

Now, we may be unable to go into the desert wilds of Africa and say why the Tzetse fly torments the wild buffalo, or back into the remote ages of geology and say why the most ancient creatures that had life preyed

and inflicted cruelties on each other. But if we look close to home, study that little arc of the circle that is sure to be clearest to us, because it is closest, can we not see that the pains and sufferings of everything around us are training and, we may hope, raising us? Certainly they are trying us; they either raise or they depress; they form, therefore, part, and a great part, of our moral probation; and, used rightly, they help us, even whilst they are trying us, to goodness, and greatness, and glory. That little child tearing the legs and wings of the fly upon his window unchecked may develop into a Domitian; trained gently in acts of kindness and thoughts of pity—to birds, and beasts, and children, and men—he may grow up to a Borroméo, a Howard, or a Wilberforce.

Probably among all the schemes of education which have commended themselves to the half-thoughtful minds of this century, none is so good, for simply moral teaching, few even for intellectual training, as that which accustoms young children to live in friendly intercourse with the lower animals, to study their natures, contribute to their pleasures, supply their wants, and sympathize with their sufferings; without suffering in ourselves, without suffering in those around us, we should inevitably settle down into mere sensual selfishness. There could be nothing left to form a kind and gentle, nor yet to generate a brave and noble character. To face suffering, to breast sorrow, to deny self that we may help others, to learn that it is "more blessed to give than to receive," to live hardly that those whom we love or serve may live more easily and less painfully, to face danger and dare death that we may do right to them that suffer wrong, that we may rescue from ruin our families, our friends, our country, our faith, or even to save the stranger we may meet on the mountain, or in the flood, amid the arrows that fly by day, or the pestilence that walketh in the darkness—all this would be impossible if there was no pain, no sickness, no sorrow, no death; and so, in being such as we are, high excellence would be unattainable without the lessons in ourselves and in all around us, which nothing could teach us but "the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together until now."

These thoughts will not solve all the mystery of that creation, wide suffering; I well know that. But may they not form a single step in the ladder of reasoning, which shall lead up to the solution? The top of that ladder we may never reach here, and it may seem to have still clouds and darkness round about it; but if we can see the possibility that much of

evil, moral and physical, does not truly owe its origin to the Author of all being, and that, when it has come into the universe, it has been made to subserve the wisest and noblest purposes in that portion of the universe, at least, with which we ourselves are conversant, does not the truest philosophy teach us to suspend our judgment rather than to pronounce authoritatively, that there can be no God of highest goodness, and power, and holiness, because He has not excluded from creation suffering, sorrow, and death?

I deny that even natural religion—*i.e.*, the investigation of natural law and the reasoning of sound philosophy upon it—suggests to us that God is altogether unknowable, and that the argument from design is antiquated and useless. Careful observation and sound philosophy, now as ever, points to a plan of consummate wisdom, on which the great machinery of the universe is framed: flaws there may seem in it, and even signs of counterwork, but still the Supreme Wisdom is ever turning these to higher account: and when we encounter the deepest darkness there breaks forth the purer and the fuller light.

We got the notion of a God infinite in power and goodness simply and solely from Christianity: let Christianity teach us how to deal with it.

Doubtless it is Christianity only which brings out all this definitely and distinctly. And let us remember that Christianity is no system of subtle reasoning, but the history of one human life. Yet if that life sheds a lustre on all that was in deepest shade before, is it not because it was not human only, but Divine?

And that Divine human life did exactly fit into all of what I have been speaking now. The mystery of the Incarnation squares with, and adapts itself to all the mysteries of creation, and of sentient and moral being. For what means it, and what does it teach? Assuredly its teaching is this: a world good, and yet blighted with misery; a soul full of pity, and, at the same time, and as a consequence of this, a superhuman endurance of superhuman suffering, the most heroic endurance springing from the most pitying love, and then a struggle of the most tremendous import between the power of good and the powers of evil, in the very scene, and on the very arena, where evil seemed most signally to be thwarting, if not actually to be triumphing over good.

"For this cause the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil"; "that by death He might destroy him that had

the power of death, even the devil." And the great Hero of the wondrous history was Himself made perfect by suffering. He, too, "learned by that He suffered." His pity, moved by scenes of pain, and sorrow, and ruin, brought Him from higher spheres to live with those who were suffering, and to help them; and the help He gave them just suited all their wants, for, whilst it had for its end to rescue them from evil, moral and physical, it was no mere mechanical drawing up out of the deep waterfloods of affliction; it drew with "the cords of a man." Every help given was equally a lesson taught. And moral lessons raising us at once to mercy and to heroism were, as I have said, impossible if there had been no misery. Misery rightly apprehended moves the human heart to all that is best, and truest, and noblest; and he is dull, and dead-hearted, and brutish indeed, who feels no glow of enthusiasm when he hears of the actions of brave and yet merciful men.

But what should move even the lowest and the dullest like the history of Jesus of Nazareth, the gentlest, the kindest, the truest, and yet the boldest, the most undaunted, the most constant to face danger and to endure death, and that, not for some to us unknown, far off, and fabled ancient history sufferers, but for us, here, and now, for all of us, for each of us, that He might bring us to God?

And do we not thus see that for that portion of the universe in which we live, for ourselves and for our fellow men, high moral excellence would have been much more noble if there had been no sin to conquer and no pain to suffer? Do we not see that Christ Himself could never have been presented to us as that perfect pattern of humanity, which has won tributes of wondering praise from infidels, unless He had had to encounter temptation, and to endure suffering, as well as to relieve it? May we not think it possible at least that angelic natures need for their highest development some ministering to others' wants, some walking through the world's hospitals, pitying, helping, and comforting the suffering and the sinning? Nay! could God's own nature of infinite perfectness be fully manifested if there was nothing to try His long suffering goodness, nothing to call forth His fatherly care for the feeble and afflicted, nothing to move His love towards a lost and perishing world, so that He should "give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"?

Say what we will, we cannot conceive of perfection in men, or angels,

or in God Himself, if there were no room for pity, and mercy, and love, and, therefore, for pain, and sorrow, and suffering. And say what we will, we can conceive nothing grander than that exhibition of love and pity which, for the relief of suffering and the moral elevation of the sufferers, moved the All powerful and the All merciful Himself to take part in the suffering of His universe, and by drinking deep of the cup of bitterness to exhaust, as none else could have done, its dregs of agony and woe. If to believe in this, to live for it, and to die in it, be want of wisdom, then "it is folly to be wise."

SANCTIFICATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. TEMPLE,
LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral Sunday, February 7, 1886.

ST. JOHN XVII, 19.

"And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

THE santification of which our Lord speaks in this place is the consecration of the whole creature, of the whole being, to the spiritual purpose of the service of our heavenly Father. To give up everything in order that His will may be accomplished, to do that will to the very full—that is the perfect sanctification of all things. And of course this sanctification in itself, does not necessarily imply any change in the thing that is sanctified. If we think of things that stand at the lowest end, and of things that stand at the highest end of being, there is no change at all in the consecration of either to the fulfilment of the will of God. When Moses consecrated the Tabernacle, when he hallowed all the vessels thereof, and all the accessories, when he consecrated the altar and the font, when he consecrated the garments of the priests, all these things remained just what they were before, and the only difference was in the purpose to which they were assigned. When we consecrate a church or consecrate a churchyard we dedicate either the one or the other to a solemn spiritual purpose, we dedicate either the one or the other to our heavenly Father; but neither the one nor the other is affected by what we have done; the purpose for which each is used is changed from what it otherwise would have been, but the thing itself remains the same. And as this is the case with that which stands lowest, so also is the same the case with that which stands highest. When the Almighty Son of God sanctifies Himself to do His heavenly Father's

will, there is no change in Him, His absolute holiness remains what it was before; He is still Himself, there is no difference because of the consecration. And so, in either case, the consecration does not necessarily carry with it anything affecting that which is consecrated. But when we think of all that stands between these, when we think of the consecration of a finite creature, or, still more, of a finite creature intelligent and possessed of will, and yet with evil in that will, it is plain that the consecration must, of necessity, imply a real change in the thing that is consecrated. Where there is evil, that evil cannot be dedicated to God: if there is anything which hinders the service of our Father, that hindrance must be taken away. That which is to be offered must be cleansed in the very act of offering, or else it cannot be offered at all: and only in proportion as it is thus cleansed is it capable of being thus sanctified: and the sanctification necessarily implies, not only a surrender of everything to God, but the purification which is necessary to make the surrender possible. The sanctifying of the disciple will, necessarily, so far differ from the sanctifying of the Divine Master that the disciple must pass through changes—changes affecting the very depths and essence of his nature before the sanctification can be complete.

And so there is, in this way, a difference between the sanctification of the Lord and the sanctification of every one that belongs to the Lord; and yet, even here, there is something that brings them near together. For although the sanctification implies no change in our Lord's own original personality, although He knew no sin, and there was no necessity for Him to be cleansed, yet He, too, partook of the infirmity of our nature; and though there was not a change of the same kind, yet in His sanctification, also, there was involved a progress: there was a rising from the lower to the higher; there was that development of His human nature which is necessary in order that He might be entirely human. And so we are not only told in the beginning of His life that "He grew in stature and in favour with God and man," but we are told that in the end of His life He "learned obedience through the things that He suffered"—that "He was made perfect by suffering." And when we think of the wonderful revelation in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the weakness of His humanity was laid bare for a few of His disciples to behold: when it was known that He, too, shared in the eternal struggle which marks of necessity the spiritual life of man: when He, too, had to resist temptation and not cast it aside as He had done before, but to contend with it, pouring

out supplications and prayers with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death—there we see how He so shared our nature that His sanctification in that respect resembled ours, and that he had to pass through what we also must pass through, that He had to learn the lessons which we also have to learn, and that He, like us, had to be perfected and sanctified by a discipline of the soul and a discipline of the body in order that His sanctification might be complete.

This is what is meant by what the Lord says here of Himself, He sanctifies Himself. Strange and startling words to those who consider what the Lord was! Strange to the believer that he should be told that the Lord Himself needed sanctification; strange that we should thus learn that He had to be perfected as we are perfected, and that we, when we are passing through the trials of life and undergoing the discipline appointed for our souls, can in this respect also find Him treading the same path before us. The Lord, the Son of God, the Creator, the Almighty Word, the Eternal Wisdom, He sanctified Himself by the same process by which His disciples were to be sanctified also; and when He calls upon us to pass through the fiery discipline that tries the soul, He is only asking us to follow where He trod before. But if this be strange, the lesson which follows is of still greater import to ourselves and our lives. He sanctified Himself. And why? Not for the sake of the sanctification, not for His own sake. These are motives quite conceivable in themselves. We can imagine that even for His own sake, and even for the sake of the perfection of His own nature, He would have sought to sanctify His humanity. And more and more, passing through all the stages which that humanity must pass through, He would desire to make it entirely a sacrifice to the Father to whom He was returning, to whom He was soon to offer up that very nature to be for ever joined with His own, and to share His very throne. But though that was a conceivable motive, it is not what is here put forward—it is for the sake of His disciples that He sanctifies Himself: it is because He desires their sanctification that He seeks His own. And the words imply that the source of sanctification always is in the sanctification of the Sanctifier Himself. It is by being Himself sanctified that He is the source, the origin, the well-spring, the fountain of their sanctification. He sanctifies Himself for their sakes, "that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

And that is the principle which necessarily underlies all the work that He has given to His Church in the regeneration of mankind: that is the prin-

ciple which underlies everything that man can do for his fellow man; that is the principle which governs all the blessing that man can bestow upon those amongst whom he lives—all the power that he can exert upon their moral and spiritual nature. It is in the sanctification of the Sanctifier that will always be found the true source of spiritual power and spiritual progress. And at all times the condition on which the Church and the servants of the Church can do the heavenly work which the Lord hath sent them to do is, that there shall be dwelling in them the same sanctification which they are to communicate to others; and he, and he alone, shall ever be able to do the Lord's Divine work who thus shares in the Lord's Divine consecration of Himself. So in those remarkable words in which St. Paul speaks to the Colossians of that which he was commissioned to do, and of the necessary condition of its being done, he tells us that he is filling up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ in his flesh for his body's sake. It was by suffering in his own person the sufferings of Christ; it was by repeating in himself that through which Christ had gone before: it was by sanctifying himself as the Lord Jesus had sanctified Himself before; it was so that St. Paul knew that it was possible for him to preach the Gospel to man; it was so, and so only, that he could serve the Church throughout his life. The condition of that service, as he knew, was to fill up whatever was deficient in this self-discipline which was necessary at once for the sanctification of himself and for the sanctification of the Church in which he laboured.

And so in all work that has to be done for the sake of God here among men, the same unchanging rule ever prevails; and the man who would undertake to do it must himself begin in his own person that regeneration which he is desiring to produce in others, and must begin to sanctify himself. If he is to help others to sanctify themselves, if he is to be the source of any moral or spiritual growth, it must be because there is in him the same moral and spiritual growth, and he must derive it from the source of all moral and spiritual growth—the sanctification of the Lord Jesus Himself.

We are living in a day when material progress has outstripped the moral and the spiritual; when on all sides of us we are forced to acknowledge the wonderful advances that are made by human science and human art: when there is such a profusion of comfort, of refinement, of gratification: when there is such an abundance of wealth that belongs to this present

world; when men know so much more than they did, though they still have before them interminable vistas of future knowledge, not yet acquired, but within possibility of reach. We are struck with all this, and filled with admiration. It is impossible for us not often to turn our eyes upon what the Lord is thus doing with His people here on earth. We are astonished when we see how rapid, how sure, and apparently how endless is the progress before us; and whilst there is this wonderful advance in all material things, there is, at the same time, a marvellous dislocation of all the ordinary work of human invention and of human labour. There are those who, in the midst of all this wealth are suffering greater privations than we can record in past history; there are those whose poverty and misery cry out against the enjoyments with which we are surrounded; there are those who are desirous to join in this great scene of human toil, to take their part in all that is doing and all that has yet to be done, who stand there, unable to find a place in which they may use their human powers, unable to find the means of supporting life itself, unable to find, in the midst of all this comfort, the barest necessities of life. We see all society thus torn and distracted, and contradictions meet us at every turn.

And why is it that with this material progress, intended, and not only intended, but efficient, for the comfort, the material comfort, of man, there should be such bodily misery, there should be such squalor, there should such unblessed and unholy conditions in which our fellow-creatures are now plunged? Why is it? And the answer to every question, the answer to all investigation, the answer to every study of the subject always is, because there is nothing moral or spiritual that corresponds to all this—because, while all this is going on day by day increasing with abundant increase, with no promise of failure or of retardation, yet still the moral standard is not higher than it was, there is no corresponding spiritual purpose in those who are receiving God's material blessing. Instead of a help to our moral and spiritual life, all this seems to be a hindrance, and the wealth of the wealthy is a temptation to them, and the poverty of the poor is a temptation to them, and the conditions of life, which seem as if by slight changes they might be made a blessing to all, are a curse at one end and a curse at the other, separating men from one another, parting their lives asunder, making it difficult for the different classes to understand each other. We feel the evil, and there is a cry everywhere to remedy it: the poor are crying out to the rich, the

degraded, are crying out to the cultivated and refined, and the ignorant are crying out to those who are possessed of knowledge: the call sounds in our ears and touches our feelings, and it is impossible for us to be deaf to the ringing force with which, with perpetual reiteration, the cry sounded again and again from the depths of society. And now we are called to look for the remedy. Where shall the remedy be found? It is not to be found in the profusest use of money: it will not be found in what is commonly called charity taken by itself. Nay, all the labour that can be bestowed on it, as we know full well by dire experience, will not suffice to set the evil right. We know, every student of the matter knows, that if the masses are to be permanently benefitted, it is their moral elevation that must be sought: that they must be raised to a higher and a nobler standard of life; that they must learn to understand, not the bearing with privations merely, and the sulky submission to the evils that come upon them, but they must understand what is meant by true self-denial, what is meant by a higher purpose and a nobler life. And we who are to teach them this seem very often to fancy that this can be taught by labour, by the sacrifice of money, by bestowing on them something to meet the present needs, and we see not that the beginning, if we are to bless them, is to find a higher moral standard in ourselves, and that if we desire, indeed, that they shall be lifted up, we must begin by ourselves rising above ourselves, learning what there is lacking in us, understanding what it is that our spiritual nature wants, seeking ever and ever more entire devotion to the Lord, looking closely to see that what we do for our fellow-men is not indulgence of mere feeling, that it is the outcome of a spirit that is sanctifying itself by turning ever upwards to look to the Lord's example, by writing on the heart the principles of his unselfish life, by following with steady steps and with determined will, the path in which He once trod on earth. It is only by beginning within, and by seeking to be what He was, that it is possible for us to do His holy work: and those who desire to be a blessing to their fellow-men must copy the words of the Lord, and since it is their sanctification that is really needed, they must begin by sanctifying themselves.

Oh, my brethern, it is not your money, your time, your labour, that your fellow-men desire, it is yourself: it is your very self given first to God and then to them. It is nothing short of that which can indeed bless your fellow-creatures. It is by giving your whole being to that which is higher and more heavenly: it is so and so only that it is possible to begin the great

work of rescuing those that are in trouble, that are in privation, that are degraded and lowered, and bringing them to happiness and peace. It is only so that society can be renewed; it is only so that it is possible to call back men to the image of Him who created them; and if any one seeks to do the Lord's work, let him thus begin by giving to the Lord his own whole being, and seeking with all his might to sanctify himself for the sake of those who, beyond all else, need such sanctification themselves.

THE LIVING AND ABIDING WORD.

BY THE RIGHT REV. C. J. ELLICOTT, D.D.

BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

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Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, on behalf of the Bible Society.

PETER i 23.

"The Word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

"The Word of God living and abiding" — for so run the words in their more accurate form — the Word of God with indwelling love operating both in the Church and in the individual, through the ever-indwelling power of the Holy Ghost, is the subject, dear brethren, to which I now invite your thoughts on this occasion of our anniversary service of prayer and praise. In choosing such a subject, I feel persuaded that I am placing before you the one subject which, consciously or unconsciously, is now occupying the whole foreground of our thoughts. Met together, as we are now, in this noble house of God, this heart and centre of the world's civilization, to commemorate the mighty mercies that have been vouchsafed along the whole course of the seventy-two years during which the British and Foreign Bible Society has been bearing the Book of Life to all lands — met together, as we are now, to bless and praise God for the diffusion of His Word, that is in itself one of the spiritual miracles of these latter days, and to pray to Him for a still brighter and more prosperous future — met together as we thus are, what other thought can be present with us than this, the living and abiding power of the Word of God?

Let this be our subject, then, at this happy gathering. Let us now, by the help of Almighty God, strive to realize all that is conveyed to us by the apostle, when, in two words telling one holy truth, he sets before us the essential and enduring characteristics of the inspired and written Word of God. "Living and abiding!" how the words seem to come home to

the experiences of each individual heart! "Living and abiding,"—oh, true and telling words! May now many a servant of Christ in this large congregation be saying within his own spirit, "Living! have I not found it to be life itself, and proved it by that truest of all tests and testimonies the testimony of a suffering soul!" Such a speaker might say, "When God in tenderness vouchsafed to deal with me, when sorrow broke over me as a wave, was it not the living and abiding comfort of the Scripture that alone sustained me when human consolation was fruitless, and even human sympathy was unavailing? Or when again, in my last heavy trial, the shadows of sins past and present were resting as a night upon the soul, when the sorrow of the world was darkening all around me, and prayer itself was dying away from my lips, do I not thankfully remember how I had just faith enough left to go to my long-closed Bible, and how the first words in the chance-opened page seemed to me a message from God Himself, and how in a moment the light seemed to break and all began to change?" Yes, verily, such a one may say, "God's love is a living Word; my soul has felt that life; my inner ear has heard. Yes, in that Word and by that Word God has spoken to me as a man speaketh with his friend, and through the lips of the apostles and evangelists the very voice has reached me of my own dear pitying Lord."

Such, I am persuaded, is the silent testimony of many a heart among us at the present time; such the inward witness that the soul of every one of us gives in our better moments to the inherent and indwelling life of the Holy Scriptures; and yet, though this is the inner belief on which our venerable Society was founded, though every one who hears me now most probably entertains substantially the same convictions, though the really marvellous developments of the work of our great Society may be humbly appealed to as a token from God Himself, yet is this the view that we seem now all to take—is this the view that has been taken of the Holy Scriptures from the very first? Is the recognition of this living, operative, and, so to say, personal power of the Holy Scriptures that which marks the teaching of the great writers and interpreters of the records of the Christian Church? What can the fair and impartial student of the doctrinal history of the past say more than this, that there are traces of such a teaching; traces, but not a full and general development of it? Two things there are which we always thankfully recognize in all the estimates of

Holy Scripture that have come down to us from the earlier times—first, the profound reverence that was ever paid in the Church of Christ to the written Word—reverence so marked that if I were asked roughly to name that which most separates the canonical Scriptures of the New Testament from writings, as, for example, such as those of Clement of Rome, which were once deemed to have almost equal authority, I should at once say that the difference which separates the canonical writings from the other writings, that which separates them at once, is the manner in which the Holy Scripture is quoted, the frequency with which it is referred to. It is as though the writer felt that he could not, depending on his own responsibility, lay down one principle, or press one deeper exhortation, without that final and corroborative authority.

This profound reverence is that which we cannot fail first to observe; and secondly, and equally clearly, this—that the authority of the Holy Scriptures was deemed to be final and supreme—that they verily were regarded, to use the language of the good man whose name I have just mentioned, Clement of Rome, as being the "true utterances of the Holy Ghost." These two characteristics certainly mark the teaching of the early Church, and they are, I need hardly say, of great and enduring importance. The view, however, of the Holy Scriptures on which our thoughts now are resting, and which our text brings so closely home to us, is one that found, no exponent, or, to use a more guarded expression, no adequate exponent among the great teachers and writers of the early ages of Christianity. Even in that storied monument which, as has been well said, "towered grandly over all that surrounds it," the letter of the unknown author to Diognetus, even there, though religion is presented to us in the twofold aspect of a revelation and a redemption, the second aspect, the redemption, is but very little dwelt upon. The essential object of the Gospel, according to this great writer—and I note him as being one of the greatest thinkers of the early ages—the essential object of the Gospel, and of Him whom the Scripture set forth, is revelation, the disclosure of truth, and the enlightenment of the human mind by the wisdom and the knowledge of God. Revelation and enlightenment! Even such a great thinker and such an earnest student of the Holy Scriptures as Origen appears to have considered the Scriptures as far more a treasury than as a history of redemption, as a revelation rather than a record of that revelation, as set forth in living words and blessed deeds. With Origen, even Christ Himself, even

He who spoke of His own words as "spirit and life," He is, to use his own expression, "the Introducer of the doctrines of Christianity," rather than himself the substance and manifestation of them. And so was it with the early Church generally; the Holy Scriptures were the standard of truth, endowed in every letter with wisdom and knowledge, but not that which every deeper thinker, every one, I trust, in this present congregation, now loves to regard them as, salvation history, the inspired record of a redemption long, long waited for, searched for through weary ages, anticipated in hope, shadowed forth in prophecy, but never, never realized until the Gospel was preached, and "Come unto Me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden" was heard from the pitying lips of the Redeemer of the world. Then a deeper view was felt, but it was never developed. Felt no doubt it was, it must have been, from the very first. Clement of Alexandria, amid all his allegorising, felt it; Chrysostom felt it; Augustine, though rather loving to dwell upon the Scriptures as a treasure-house of wisdom and knowledge, felt the great truth of the text, and felt it at times vividly and fully. Even in the mediæval Church, when all seemed one dreary waste of scholasticism, this living and, so to say, personal power of God's Word was not wholly unrecognised: glimpses of its vital truth there have been in all ages of the Church's history, and it was not until the stirring days of the Reformation that the Scripture was felt to be not simply the display of God's thought, but the history and disclosure of his loving purpose; not merely the setting forth of doctrines, but of the person of Him who revealed them: not truth only, but salvation and love.

And this deeper view, this recognition of the living and personal relation of the Holy Scriptures to each individual soul is more and more becoming realised in these later days. Though many things, dear brethren, are against us, though faith with many of us has lost its first power, though a doubting spirit has of late spread even within the Church itself, yet praise be to God! the truth that His word is a "living" word has been felt and acknowledged to be pure and holy in our own times even more than when that truth was first distinctly recognised. Even at the time of the Reformation some of the old shadows of intellectualism still lingered. The full depths of the truths involved in the mysterious subject of personality had not been sounded by men whose lives were spent in action and in the heat and dust of daily conflict. The general truth that the Holy Scriptures were no mere collection of abstract truths, but the very

opening out of God's word and life, was recognised: but the development of this truth, the carrying of it into practice, as witness the mighty work of this great and prosperous Society, belongs to more recent days, and may reverently be regarded as a sign, clear and encouraging, that even in an age when under one aspect doubt would have seemed to have acquired a pervasive power hitherto unprecedented, the Scripture has yet become more loved and more realised than ever. Nay, to doubt and scepticism—let us not be afraid to own it—we owe much. By the working of the power of the Holy Ghost, many of these very movements of thought which are against the truth have been overruled to further the truth, and the very alleged errors and discrepancies in Holy Scripture have led us to investigations which have opened out clearer views, and enabled us to realise characteristics in the recognition of which much of a deeper belief has been found to be involved. We may observe, for example, how much our reverence and love of Scripture has deepened in proportion as we have realised the mystery that God, in order that He might speak to each human soul, has vouchsafed to speak unto men through men. Yes, blessed be God, this treasure has been in earthen vessels. The Scripture is no collection of records whose origin is hid in the twilight of mystery, or merely a supernatural revelation of superhuman truths that has come to us we know not how—a collection of mystic documents that as much needs a teaching Church to interpret as it has needed a translating Church to guard and to authenticate. No, no; thanks be to God, that which we believe in, and on the heart's reception of which everything here or hereafter depends, is the record of that which every human soul, consciously or unconsciously, sighs for—redemption, and, through redemption, a return to the Father and a God. And this record, in all its wondrous details, man has been permitted, qualified, enlightened, and inspired to write down as uttered from the lips of God, and yet in writing it to preserve all his human individuality, and by that very individuality to appeal more persuasively to the heart and to the spirit. Real belief in the Scripture, as I am persuaded very many here know by spiritual experience, depends on the heart and not on the head; and it may be, nay, it would certainly seem to be, that it is the latent appeal of that very truthful human element in the written Word, which answers to modern assaults on the faith have brought out in its true relation to the Divine element, that has borne with it to so many in our own day the ultimate and consolidating conviction.

Nay, more, inspiration, that difficulty to many a true heart, has of late been far more clearly felt and realised. We feel inspiration more because we have learnt that we cannot rigorously define it. We know with a heart knowledge that the Word of God is "living and abiding," and we seek no more; we know that the life is there because we feel it stirring in the soul as we read, stirring not suggestively but operatively, manifesting its own inherent power within us when we receive it with love, just as the grain of corn carries within itself its own inner life, and reveals that life when cast by the sower in the bosom of the receiving earth. This we know, and it is enough.

If, then, dear brethren, these things are so, if this text on which we are meditating does verily set before us the true and essential nature of Christ's work, then what encouragement it ministers to us in our great and yearly widening work! How it commends that work to us as one of the two most holy works in which a Christian can take part on this side of the grave! Two works there are in relation to God's word, one, the responsible work of bringing that Word home to man's heart by preaching, the other the scarcely less responsible duty of circulating and spreading God's Word - yes, I will be bold enough to say the scarcely less responsible duty of spreading it; for if that Word is what the text describes it, a "living Word"; if it involves in itself that personal element by which it speaks to each individual heart, if it contains that quickening and appealing power which we have set forth; if the two hundred and fifty languages into which, to a great degree through the agency of this Society, it has now been translated, show this, that there is no language on earth in which the blessed thoughts of Scripture cannot flow as truly as in the language in which they were written - if such be the Word of God, then who does not feel the force of the appeal to join in circulating that Word? Who that loves Christ can refuse the call to take part in bearing His message of love to countless thousands that are mutely longing for that message, and who even amid the deep shadows of their heathen darkness are still unconsciously looking for and hoping for the day?

This is the Book that we are now called upon to send everywhere to a waiting world. Seventy three years ago this call came to the godly and devoted men who founded the Bible Society, and now in these latter days this call is renewed to us. Who can refuse to hear it? Thank God, there are many among us who do hear it, and hear it gladly! There is many a

cheering and encouraging sign of the blessings manifold and numerous that have rested on this Society—the deeper interest that is everywhere showing itself in the elucidation of God's Word, the wondrous illustrations of Biblical history that have been recently collected from the most ancient annals of the world, the former attitude of defenders of the faith, or the patient care of translators and revisers, the multiplied labour of interpreters, the deep, manly determination that, be all else as it may, the Bible shall never be withdrawn from the hands of our children—all these things may well minister hope and encouragement, all may serve to bring home to us the cheering thought that the Holy Scriptures are still dear to the sons of the Reformation, and that though doubt may be more widely spread, yet that one book by which England has advanced to the forefront of the nations of the earth is still loved and honoured by this kingdom and people. Wherefore, dear friends, let us be of good heart. Let us pray that the cheering signs which are now vouchsafed to us may be the harbingers of still brighter days, and of a still wider spread and fuller glorification of the loving, abiding Word. Let us pray one earnest prayer to love that Word ever more and more, and in the strength and comfort of that Word let us go forward, hopeful, thankful, and rejoicing.

LAW AND CHARACTER.

BY THE VERY REV. DR. CHURCH,

DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday Afternoon, April 9, 1885.

ROMANS III. 1–2.

"What advantage, then, hath the Jew? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

THE history of the Bible, as I ventured to point out last Sunday, shows the growth and development of a special religious character, which, through many stages and trials, was ultimately to become one which had the mind of Christ for its standard and model. The foundation of it was laid in the recognition of individual responsibility, the individual relation of the soul to God, its Maker and its Judge. The example of Abraham, the friend of God, with his keen and high sense of this sacred relation, his faith, his nobleness, the soundness and loyalty of his heart, his solitariness and detachment, his extreme trial—all this was [illegible] of worth whatever was good and excellent in the religious character of his successors was grown, the type to which it was to conform itself. "Look," it was said, "unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."

This special religious character, a thing different from anything else in the world, was to be nurtured and gradually unfolded in a select nation, chosen for that purpose, whose fortunes were directed with a view to this end, and whose institutions—political, religious, and social—were appointed, as it were, to be its cradle. With righteous Abraham, the great example of what God approved in man, the relation was bound by the closest ties as his children and family, and the [illegible] of the commonwealth of Israel were made with the intention that the heirs of the great

promise should never lose sight of its origin and conditions. The Hebrew nation was to be the guardian of that character, which Abraham was, as it was also to be the guardian of the great hopes which Abraham had. That character as it was even in the Hebrew race was still in the rudeness and harshness and incompleteness of immature beginnings. The formation of that strange and complex thing, the traditional and fixed character of a people—so vague, so indeterminate, so open to question in its details, and yet so certain and visible on a large scale—is not the work of a few years, or some single influence; it is the work of time, the combined result of many lives and many events through many generations. But from the first the people of Israel were told of their calling. From the first they were told what they existed for, and what their existence pointed to; from the first, in all their superstition and ignorance and barbarous perverseness, they were told again and again, "Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation"; and "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy." That is what it meant in the mouth of the apostles after the day of Pentecost; that is what their history was to lead to. The religious character, as they could understand it, was but incorrect and imperfect: but it had, however, gradually the lineaments and outline of that which was to be developed to grow throughout the ages, until it was made perfect in Christ Jesus.

The early history of Israel is marked by three great features—a great redemption and deliverance, the transformation of tribes and families into a nation and a state, and, lastly, a strict and definite law. That isolation of the individual self which for great religious purposes was enforced upon Abraham was now corrected and compensated for, equally great religious purposes, by a discipline which made Israel feel one in communion and fellowship, one in kindred, one in worship, one in responsibility, one in hope, one in all that could bind brother to brother in all the necessities and all the blessings of life. But the great governing fact of this period was the fact of the law: it was after the deliverance from Egypt and the constitution of the tribes as a separate people that they were placed under the yoke of the Law and the bond of the covenant. The presence, the preeminence, the exacting and all pervading supremacy of law, moral law, religious law, ceremonial law, political and social law, law definite, strict, severe unbending, distinguishes the four last books of the Pentateuch. How severe, how distasteful this discipline was, how difficult to

submit to and enforce they also show us. But to impress upon Israel, however reluctant, the idea and the reality of law was the intention of all this early stage of their history; it was never to be forgotten, never to lose its hold over their minds.

This, then, seems to be the second great stage in that training, which the Bible sets before us, of men in the formation of that religious character which was ultimately to issue in the mind and the likeness of Christ. Very different and unlike at this stage of its development what it was to come to, and yet an essentially preliminary and preparatory step; it was the planting—nay, the burning—into the religious mind of the supremacy of duty, of the moral law, and the obligation of obedience to its Lord and giver. Here at the outset of this great school of character, which we know as the history of Israel, of Judaism, stands its first great lesson, the Decalogue and its applications. There was much besides that which was imposed and commanded, much besides to which we give the name of law, much which carried with it deep significance and grave warnings and vast hopes, which spoke of sin, of forgiveness, of judgment, of mysterious expiation. But between all this, important and full of influence as it was, between this and the law of the Ten Commandments, there is the interval which lies between the moral law and every other obligation and interest of a moral being. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

First and foremost in that dispensation which is so filled with the notion of command and law that we give it emphatically and distinctively the name of the Law—first and foremost, as its foundation stone and groundwork, stands a strong, clear, moral rule, the unchangeable law proclaimed on Mount Sinai—those living oracles, as St. Stephen calls them, which the great lawgiver received at his Master's hand; and in which, after all the changes of thousands of years, the heart of man still hears the voice of God—"Thou leddest Thy people, like sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron." The priesthood, the characteristic ceremonial law, was, in its own time, of the most eventful consequence; it taught, it prophecied, it warned; but it served for its time, and it was not to last. But what was of permanent significance in Judaism was the paramount place of the moral Law. Aaron the priest was great, but Moses the law giver was greater. By placing the Ten Commandments in the fore front it made good its claim to be an everlasting Covenant; it taught and laid down the moral

conditions of religious character, not only for its own time, but for all times; it was a step in religious history of which we can even now but imperfectly measure the greatness. Think of what the world was, what it had been, what it was to be long afterwards. We know something of it in its vast conquering and devastating empire, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia. We dimly gaze outside of them on the east and north and south, in the boundless wilderness of the nations ranging beyond them. No one can look upon that scene of history without feeling almost giddy as he contemplates the shifting appearances, not only of all things religious, but of all things moral. It is like the sickening aspect of a wild confused waste of waters, where nothing keeps its shape for an instant but passes into another, where all whirls about in eddies, in a hopeless entanglement of form and substance. You seem to see Nature running wild, dazzled, bewildered, maddened by the sense of its own ignorance: you see the most fantastic imaginations, the most extravagant caprice, the most monstrous instincts, the enormous play on a terrific scale of a fierce pride, and of a madness of boundless conquest and absolute power, and you ask what really is the test by which to judge all this. Has it all an equal claim to assert itself? Are the most hateful and most repulsive forms of blood and carnage only hateful because we are not accustomed to them? Are they on a level with the phenomena of Nature, neither more nor less blameworthy? There is the sense of Divine power, there is the recognition of right and wrong, of ought and ought not, of duty of some kind but of what kind, of what restraint, of what service—either to God or man? The moment you ask, the idea seems to disappear, swept away, dissolved, lost in the clouds and storms of contradiction and confusion. Into this lawless world of tumult and self will—tyrannous in its blindness, its hatred, its cruelty, its greed—the people of Israel were launched to begin their wonderful and perilous course. They had too much affinity, too much sympathy with all the evil that was round them, but there was that among them which was nowhere else: at the head of their march through time and change, like the Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night, stood fixed and stable and immovable, amid all that was mutable and fluctuating, the Moral Law. Elsewhere, in other legislation, in other institutions more or less partially, the moral law disclosed itself: but here it was the very condition of the existence of a nation, the reason that gave meaning to its being. It might be disobeyed: but it was

acknowledged as a tie between God and man, Divine in its source, sovereign in its authority. Judaism was a religion, and not only a polity, and, embodying a definite religious character, preserved it, continued it, unfolded it, not only in the written letter, but in fact and life: and in moulding the religious character at this stage of it the law, in its elevation as the moral law, in its stern and absolute control as "The Law," was the great energetic agency.

This, then, as we follow the account given in the Bible of the progress of the religious character, seems the special feature and characteristic of what, speaking roughly, may be viewed as its second period. It was the presence, the physical action of strong and pervading law, and that a law which incorporated the moral law as its supreme and governing element. The soul which in the history of the patriarchs had learned its relation to God had now to go through the severer discipline of learning to live according to His will with an intelligent and serious sense of what and how great the task was. It needed a rule, it needed teaching how to regard and respect this rule, and how to use it. In the wild scene around, of uncontrolled passions and clashing excitements, it wanted some fixed standard and beacon by which it could make sure of its ground and steady itself in the terrible disorder. And so the law was given. Amid the clouds and thunders of Sinai that beacon was set up as a standard of right and wrong, of what men ought and ought not to do, or to wish, which the heart of men, when it was given, felt to be as fixed and sure as the solid earth and unchanging heaven. The law came in, as St. Paul says, because of transgression, to tame the wondering self-will of nature, to fix the great points and limits within which the soul must bind itself if it was not to lose itself in moral anarchy and ruin. It came to teach men not only to fear God, but the much more difficult lesson, to obey Him—to obey as the moral duty of a dependent creature: to obey as the only key to confidence and trustful hope in a being who looks to God as his Father and Ruler. It came to teach men to obey that they might learn to rule themselves, to be trusted with their own fate, to be each in his own place, with order, lord and king over himself. It came to impress more solemnly and deeply on the generations that were to be the fact of sin, to remind men self-forgetful and self-complacent, as they easily come to be, of their continual shortcomings, and of what God thinks of them; to open men's eyes to the weakness of their moral efforts. And the law, with its per

emptoriness, its rigour, had yet another office. There is no strange self-deceit more deeply and obstinately rooted in man's heart than this—that those whom God favours may take liberties that others may not, that religious men may venture more safely to transgress than others, that good men may allow themselves to do wrong things. There is not a more certain fact in the range of human experience than that with strong and earnest religious feeling there may be a feeble and imperfect hold on the moral law, often a very loose sense of justice, truth, and purity. The law, held up in its strictness over the children of Abraham, the inheritors of his stupendous promises, redeemed from Pharaoh, would teach them at the very outset of their history of what they found it so hard to realise—that the Lord of Jew and Gentile is no respecter of persons, that He has given unto no man licence to sin.

Here as regards its office in preparing for the true Christian character, in furnishing what was an elementary, but still holy, possible portion of it—here was the service rendered in its time by the law. We know that it could not, was not meant to make anything perfect—either the knowledge of God, or the moral standard, or the religious character. The history is, indeed, in its most prominent aspect, the history of a great failure. It is the history of a long series of struggles against the law, the record of a great and apparently unsuccessful moral conflict—a great and awful tragedy in which the fifth act closes with the perishing of the righteous. Often through it, even at the best, men see what is better and approve of it, and then follow what is worse. Often we see the will to do good is present; but how to perform it men find difficult. And over and above all this in the people, as a whole, it presents the continual spectacle of resistance and disobedience ungoverned and incorrigible: its weakness is conspicuous; and not a few the law which the Psalmist loved so truly, and which the prophets interpreted and illustrated. And in the influence which it did exert on the religious character, it seems, in some way, to narrow, and to harden in the Jewish character as it came out after centuries of the law. There is that harsh and unhopeful feature to which we give the name of loyalty, the fervency to law, the idolatry of law, the pride of law, the bondage to the letter, obstinate, unsympathetic, contemptuous at once and fearful of everything in the free outside world. But what the law was to do, and what it did, was this—it impressed upon the people of Israel, and then upon the Christian Church, and ultimately upon the

human mind, for all time, that the indispensable foundation of the religious character was the honest and good heart, obedient and sincere in its obedience according to its might to the moral law, for its own sake, and for the sake of Him who gave it. It impressed upon them, and upon the world, what was then a new lesson—the inseparable connection of true religion with the highest human morality, justice, truth, self-restraint, self-command, and mercy. How fruitful this great step was, and how necessary, the whole history which followed shows us.

The open conflict in the world between good and evil, between truth and falsehood, is often an anxious and a doubtful one. But if that which is on the side of good and truth be faithless and disloyal, the odds are indeed heavy on the side of evil. And the law not only contronts and rebukes the sinner, but it is also warns the righteous. It is not only a standing witness against public and manifest wickedness, it not only lifts its awful voice when we are, perhaps, ruthlessly made not only to know but to imagine those hideous and uncontrollable forms of portentous guilt which lurk amidst our brilliant civilisation and energetic religion, those depths of Satan which men can hardly look down into without deadly fascination, which may cost them their soul, but it has a further office: it was given to make us feel and to restrain that inward moral unsoundness of the conscience and the will which men may keep secret, each one in the depth of his heart, even while wishing to serve God, even while believing that he serves Him. Decisively, and for good, it was laid down that if a man was to be a servant of God, righteous in His sight, a religious man in the true sense of the word, his serious rule and standard must be the moral law—the law that bound the soul, without trifling and without evasion, to duty, to goodness, to God, its Source and Judge. You know, my brethren, to us this essential interdependence of the religious character and the moral law is a mere commonplace; but it is not less one of the greatest truths that man has to learn, and one of the most difficult of his lessons, and one which, over and over again, he has shown himself most ingenious in avoiding. Believe me, the kindling and absorbing earnestness which has given itself with ardour to some high religious object is not safe, has no solid and trustworthy foundation, unless it has in view, unforgotten and deeply reverenced, the great fixed law of moral right, ruling, with no reserves, over the unseen and inner life. No form of that earnestness can make sure of itself without the guarantee of sincere obedience

and self-command in the certainties of duty, whether in the triumphant elevation of worship or the joy of self-abandonment and sacrifice, or in the enterprises and adventures of charity, or the enthusiasm of a generous hope, or the zeal which is ambitious for some cause of truth or purity, or conquest of souls for God; or in the devout quiet of a life that seeks and that works in the shade. Everywhere, beyond all these, the obligations of the law of right and wrong have to be remembered and answered, everywhere men have failed deeply from forgetting them. All history is full of warning, of great religious characters blunted and distorted, of great religious efforts hopelessly marred and degenerated because, in the eagerness and confidence of good intention, the Ten Commandments were left on one side, or kept out of view; or, it was taken for granted that of course they obeyed because people meant to do God service.

And we must be blind if we do not still sometimes see among ourselves signs and instances of the same mistake. At any rate, let us remember the lesson for ourselves; at any rate, in our own case, let us not fall into the deadly self-deceit that because we are religious in wish, in feeling, we are dispensed from the obligations or the restraints which we see bind others—because we are, as we think, good people, because we have the feeling of being in the right way; because God, it may be, has been very gracious to us we may venture on what conscience persists in warning us is unlawful, is wrong. Let us not think that because we frequent sacraments, and delight in Divine service, and feel devotion and uplifting of heart and prayer, we need not fear the temptations which are common to men—we can afford to indulge our dislike of trouble or relax our care and vigilance, or neglect plain duties, or even be bold in things more dangerous still. Not the stern and rigorous law only, but the New Testament puts this danger before us. It has some dreadful foreshadowings of self-deceit. Even good people like to do things which their hearts prompt them to, and shut their eyes to the question of right and wrong. And this is the answer that may one day meet them when they ask whether all their lives they have not been devoted to Christ's service and familiar with His household: "I never knew you." Even good people are too ready with excuses to escape disagreeable duties, and one day they may be surprised at learning that the duty they evaded was to Christ Himself: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." God grant us the Psalmist's prayer, and to understand God's law in the Psalm

ist's spirit: "Oh, let my heart be sound in Thy statutes, that I be not ashamed." "I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou hast set my heart at liberty." "I see that all things come to an end, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad." "Oh ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil." "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, and give thanks for the remembrance of His holiness."

THE NAMELESS PROPHET.

By REV. ALFRED ROWLAND, LL.B., B.A.

Preached in Park Chapel, Sunday January 24th, 1886.

1 KINGS xiii. 7, 8.

"And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place."

This passage forms part of a very remarkable narrative. The miraculous element is so prominent that certain critics would have the chapter expunged from Holy Scripture. Such an eclectic process, however, if it were followed to its legitimate conclusion, would leave us nothing worth calling a Divine revelation. The natural and the supernatural are closely interwoven, as are the woof and web of a fabric, and the destruction of either would be the practical dissolution of the whole: indeed, nowhere is this more manifestly true than in the life and death, in the resurrection and ascension, in the works and claims of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

If ever miracles and signs occurred, they were appropriate, if not absolutely necessary, to God's cause in the days of Jeroboam. Idolatrous practices were being established in the kingdom of Israel as its distinctive mark, and most of the worshippers of Jehovah had been seduced from their allegiance to Him by the allurements of worldly policy and of social influence. The extravagant prosperity of Solomon's reign had emasculated the people: their simplicity had been corrupted, and their spiritual life had been almost extinguished. Now, if ever, it was needful that peculiar and startling revelations of God should be given, and that the sea of spiritual life, which is always silently surging around the material world, should break into the visible sphere. As afterwards, in the days of Ahab, so now, in the days of Jeroboam, God in His wisdom gave special

manifestations of His presence and power. And although the effect on the idolatrous king was only transient, doubtless some godless people were warned, and some secret worshippers of Jehovah were encouraged.

The tragic history of the nameless prophet, which is recorded in this chapter, is startling and suggestive. The man wins our admiration, and yet calls for our pity. He seems at once heroic and foolish. He delivers his message with splendid courage, and then unaccountably falls into disobedience and disaster. If we judge of him from ordinary biographies, his character will appear utterly incomprehensible: but if we judge of him from ourselves, he will appear sadly natural, both in the waywardness of his temper and in the entanglement of his motives. Thus, by God's blessing, we may be led by our thoughts about him to a deeper knowledge of our own possibilities and perils.

Jeroboam had just been founding the kingdom of Israel, having rent away the ten tribes from the nerveless rule of Solomon's son, Rehoboam. It was as a shrewd politician, rather than as an idolater for he was essentially a man of the world, a clever opportunist that he was now engaged in setting up the worship of the calves at Bethel. The place already had many sacred associations, for it was here that Abraham had held his own against the Canaanites, and here Jacob had seen the heavenly ladder, and had built his altar unto the Lord. For these and other reasons Bethel was chosen as a site for the new worship, which was now being inaugurated by splendid rites in imitation of those with which Solomon had consecrated the Temple at Jerusalem. That great king had chosen the feast of Tabernacles as the season of dedication, and therefore Jeroboam did the same, although he daringly altered the date of the festival from the seventh month to the eighth. We can imagine the assembling of the people, the erection of tents and booths for their shelter during the week, and the magnificent procession of heathen priests to the altar erected before the golden calf. Beside that altar Jeroboam, the king, himself stood: for as Solomon had led his people in prayer, so Jeroboam intended to act as prince, and leader, and priest, personally to offer incense to the idol. Hidden till now in the crowd was one man who dared to brave the king's wrath in this supreme moment of triumphant sin. He was a prophet from the neighbouring and rival kingdom of Judah. Just at this critical time —regardless of consequences—he stepped boldly out into the vacant space

around the altar, and suddenly stood beside the king. Then, without uttering a word either to Jeroboam or to the people, treating them as if they were more dead and hard than the very stones of which the altar was built, he thundered out this message: "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord: Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."

Who was this bold prophet? Josephus identified him with Iddo, the seer; but the statement is merely conjectural. The man must remain nameless, as he is left in this chapter. God has had many servants besides this one who have contentedly done their work without ever having their names upon it. And there are not wanting now those who are forming the characters of the next generation by educational work, those who are secretly combatting in obscure haunts the vices which prevail: those who are affecting by literature the policy of the country, and the thought of the Church, whose names are unknown outside the narrow circle of those who love them. But not one of them is forgotten before God.

Let us first consider—

I. The Message delivered by this nameless prophet.

1. *Its Divine origin* is expressly asserted in the second verse: "he cried . . . in the word of the Lord." This is a remarkable phrase. It is not said that he cried the word of God, but that he cried "in" it—as if his message were the sphere in which he lived, the atmosphere he breathed. Nothing could more forcibly suggest the source from which all religious teachers draw their power. It is the consciousness of having a Divine . . . the presence of a Divine call, the confidence that what they have to say is "the Word of the Lord," which is the sign of the true prophet. Samuel would never have become what he did become but for the call of God which reached him in the Temple. Moses could never have accomplished his noble work for the world had he not known and spoken with Jehovah, who appeared to him in the bush. Isaiah received his inspiration when he "saw the Lord" whose train filled the Temple, and learnt to say: "Here am I, Lord, send me." And this was equally characteristic of the apostles of Jesus Christ, each of whom could state his credentials in this challenge: "Have not I seen the Lord?" This is equally necessary for us, who aspire to be religious teachers, whether in the home or in the church. In earnest prayer we must wait upon our God: in the

depths of inward experience we must listen to His voice: His Spirit must lead us into truth, and then all that He has commanded us we are bound to speak. We are not to think out our difficulties aloud, or to propound uncertainties and ill-digested speculations, but we are called upon to deliver messages. In this the scientific teacher and the religious teacher are unlike. In the investigations of science all has to be *discovered* by the co-ordinate observations and discussions of various minds: but in religious truth much is *revealed*: and it is this revelation which rebukes sin and upholds righteousness, which proclaims a Saviour and foretells a Judge, which we have to announce to the world as ambassadors of God. We have to think and to pray in our studies over truths not yet made clear to our own minds: but as teachers we have to proclaim what we have already tasted, handled, and felt of the good Word of Life. Depend upon it the world will be stirred now, as it was in former ages, by those who feel that the Word of the Lord is as a burning fire shut up in their bones, who are weary with forbearing and cannot stay. Do not be too greatly troubled, then, because you are still ignorant of much that you want to know. It is something if you have one real message to deliver to the world, it is something if you can place one little child in safety in Jesus's arms, and all that is demanded of you is that you should be faithful to the message and the Master. May God help us to live in an atmosphere that is Divine, rather than human; to speak and act "in the Word of the Lord."

2. *The depth to nature* of this message deserves attention. The very name of the avenger, Josiah, is mentioned, though it was 300 years before he was born; and it was distinctly foretold that idolatrous priests would be slain on the altar erected in defiance of God, and that the site now being set apart for heathen worship would be defiled and dishonoured by the bones of the dead. Centuries elapsed before the fulfilment of this threat, but it came at last, and came at the appointed time, proclaiming to all future ages this solemn truth, which it is madness to ignore: "the wages of sin is death."

You cannot fail to have noticed how, not only on this occasion, but on many other occasions, the nature of the punishment was determined by the nature of the sin, as if the well-known *lex talionis* was a theocratic law. God's punishments are never arbitrary. They are the legitimate issues of the crime or vice they belong to. The sinner is destroyed by his own sin. And this is in harmony with all that we know of God's works. Science is showing the links between cause and effect with ever growing

clearness and certainty; and the doctrine of evolution reveals that limbs may perish by disuse or may be developed by necessities of life in new surroundings. This is true everywhere, not least in the punishments and privations threatened in Scripture, here and hereafter. Hell, for example, is not a place of material fire, as mediæval theology declared, but it is not less to be dreaded as the legitimate and necessary outcome of passions uncontrolled, and of sins unrepented. If only we knew the horrors of it, we should thank God yet more earnestly for the cross of Christ which ever stands between it and the true penitent as an impassable barrier.

After our glance at the message this prophet delivered, let us turn to admire

II. THE COURAGE DISPLAYED.—His boldness it is not easy to over-rate. He was a Jew, appearing alone among the men of Israel, at a time when hatred to Judah was fiercest; yet he dared to face them. They were inaugurating idolatrous worship, which was to be the special glory of their kingdom; yet he openly condemned it in the name of Jehovah. Jeroboam was no weakling to be frightened by bold words, but a man of despotic and resolute temper, who at the time was rejoicing in the pride of his new royalty; yet this prophet braved his wrath. Though he knew that his cry "O altar, altar!" might be the last cry he uttered and that he might the next moment be torn to pieces by infuriated fanatics, he risked it. Well would it have been for him if then and there he had died, at the post of duty.

Now, we believe that it was the consciousness the prophet had that he was God's messenger (to which we have already referred) that gave him this heroism. It was this which prepared Moses to dare the wrath of Pharaoh; this which nerved Elijah to stand alone face to face with the prophets of Baal; this which enabled Peter and John undauntedly to face the Sanhedrim; and this which made Ambrose, and Knox, and Luther, and Zwingle types of a truer heroism than any field of battle has revealed.

Brethren, that same sense of the Divine presence may be yours and mine —it will be if we live lives of prayer; and then there will be no peril so great but in facing it we shall not be able to say: "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." Some of you have had times when this has been intensely realised, but, unhappily, there has been ebb as well as flow in your experience. Sometimes you have boldly protested against what you knew to be wrong; you have offended dear friends by your earnestness in maintaining God's cause; you have endured the scorn of some who, assuming

an intellectual superiority they are far from possessing, condemned you as an old-fashioned saint; you have rebuked conversation which was inimical to purity or to reverence. All this has been possible and even easy when you have realised that God was near, that He knew your difficulties, and would help you in your witness bearing; and remembering this, you may take home to yourself, with humble thankfulness, the words of the Lord Jesus when He said: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him, also, will I confess before the angels of heaven."

III. THE SAFETY OF THE PROPHET was assured, and credentials of his commission were given, when the altar was suddenly cleft in twain, and all the ashes poured out. We see nothing incredible here, or in many other miraculous signs mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. Supernatural signs are surely the legitimate evidences of a supernatural revelation. They are simply the assertion of the supremacy of the spiritual and unseen over the material and visible; and if we really believe that the things seen were not made of things which do appear, we need not be incredulous when evidences of the existence of these are given. Among the phenomena of Nature, we all know that a mountain may be still and silent for ages, villages cluster round its base, men toil and children play on its sides, and they have no suspicion that it is volcanic; but at last the subterranean fires may burst out, and just as that force, long hidden, asserts itself within the limits of half known law, so it may be, so it has been, within the limits of unknown law. Our Lord Jesus Christ boldly said of His own miracles: "If ye believe not Me, believe the *works*," the works which modern admirers of His moral teaching would rule out of court'—and the apostles put the resurrection of Christ, which some would explain away, into the very forefront of Christian evidences. There are periods in the world's history when that kind of evidence is specially needed, and those who live in other periods have no right to deny its existence, on the ground that it is outside the range of the observations they have been able to make in their own limited sphere. This prophet was preserved by miracle, because nothing short of it could keep him: and the rending of the altar, and the withering of Jeroboam's arm were visible, and therefore appropriate, signs for an idolatrous and sensual people.

IV. But there were greater dangers than those which arose from physical force surging around this prophet, and we must look at THE TEMPTATION HE RESISTED to which our text alludes. Jeroboam failed in the use of violence: but, nothing daunted, he sought to overcome the messenger

of Jehovah by craft. With bland courtesy he invited him to his house. He did this not because he wished to honour the messenger of the Lord, but because he meant to destroy the effect of his message. The assembly was breaking up; the people were departing for their homes profoundly moved by what they had heard and seen; and if they were left thus they might possibly return to their allegiance to Jehovah, and thus destroy the independence of the newly founded kingdom. With his usual keenness, Jeroboam saw that if only this prophet, through whose prayer his arm had been restored, would go home with him in seeming friendship, the impression made by his previous opposition would be greatly lessened. It was on this account that the man of God had been strictly commanded not to enter any house whatever within the limits of Jeroboam's kingdom, for he was the representative of Jehovah, who, through him, would declare that He could not dwell amongst these impenitent idolaters. Hence the king's invitation was firmly refused. "If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for it was so charged me by the Word of the Lord." His first temptation was resisted, and the victory thus far was won.

Doubtless there are many who have had such conflicts and conquests. Tempted to sin, you have replied: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Sitting among the sinners, where you could not avoid them, you did not approve their mockery even by the faintest smile. Able to win wealth and position, you resolutely refused to stoop to do what you knew was base and false. There are times with you when such victories are easier to be won; perhaps when you have come fresh from a Christian home, and the blessed dew of life's morning has yet rested on you: perhaps when you still felt the impression made on your mind by some book you had read or by some address you had heard: perhaps when you renewed your vows before God at the sacramental feast, or in the hour of secret prayer. Then, rising up in God's strength, you have resisted the devil, and he has fled from you. In such hours of triumph I would entreat you most vividly to remember, and most humbly to acknowledge, that the victory came only through Him that loved you, or you may ultimately experience the fall which came to the prophet after his first victory was won.

V. THE SECOND TEMPTATION, which we must not overlook, was successful and fatal. It came from an "old prophet," who lived near by, who approached his fellow-servant when he was tired, and who, professing

to have received a message from God, induced him to enter his house in Bethel, and thus to disobey the command of the Lord.

What was the motive which prompted this successful tempter? Probably he was not a "false prophet" in the technical sense, although such men abounded; nor ought we to charge him with the malignant design of bringing about this man's death. He appears to have been one who knew the Lord's will, but did it not. He was living at Bethel, where this idolatrous worship was being instituted; but he appears to have uttered no protest against it, and now his cowardice was rebuked by the daring of this stranger. He naturally wished to have him under his roof, partly, perhaps, to assuage his own convictions by entertaining hospitably the man of God, and partly to reinstate himself with the people as being also a prophet and the friend of prophets.

If it be further asked why this temptation succeeded, while that of Jeroboam failed, we should attribute it to the self complacence and self confidence engendered by successful resistance to the king, and to the sense of false security which generally succeeds a crisis of peril. Evidence of this is seen in the fact that he rested under a terebinth, instead of pressing homeward, as he had been told to do.

1. *Learn from this, brethren, that the conquest of one evil often leads to an assault from another.*—You may, for example, be overcome by scepticism, although you have conquered sensuality. You may be enthralled by avarice, though you have escaped the entanglements of pleasure. You may be ruined by spiritual pride, though you have got rid of sinful indifference. Never forget that it is a life long conflict you have to wage. If the Egyptians are drowned, the Amorites and Canaanites still await you. If gross sin fail in its attempts, subtle sin may bring you into bondage. Therefore, do not say to your soul at any time: "Take thine ease!" Listen in your home, in your business, and in the sanctuary, to the voice of the faithful Master, who evermore is saying: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

2. *Learn also that it is a perilous thing to linger in a scene of temptation though for a time seemingly harmless or even helpful to God's work.*—If this prophet had not rested, instead of hurrying forward, he would not have been overtaken before he crossed the border line of safety between the two kingdoms.

We have often seen a moth singe its wings in the light, and yet return to it again and again, until, scorched and shrivelled, it has dropped down dead

before our eyes. And we have known those who have stood in the way of sinners, and have enjoyed the companionship of the godless, until at last—in defiance of early teaching and youthful promise—they have sat in the seat of the scorner. God says to us all—but most emphatically to the young, whose characters are still plastic—about evil literature, and evil haunts, and evil companionships: "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

In conclusion, let us notice—

VI. The trifling disobedience which brought about so terrible a retribution.—It seemed a very small offence to go home with a brother prophet for pleasant, and perhaps profitable, intercourse. But there was no doubt about the will of God in this matter. His messenger was not for a moment deceived by the lie told by his tempter about a Divine message having been received by him. He knew perfectly well that he had been forbidden to enter any house for weighty reasons, and that God would not contradict himself or change his mind. Yet, in spite of his better knowledge, this man allowed his sensitive wish for food and rest to prevail over his convictions of duty.

Brethren, with you and me an act may seem as trifling as that, and yet it may involve a momentous principle. It was a small thing for Eve to take the fruit of the tree; but it was an act of direct disobedience, and therefore brought death and all to the world, and all our woe. It is in what we call trifles that God tests our obedience and love. If a child refuses to do a little act, because it is forbidden, we are more pleased, as parents, with his refusal than if the act had been notoriously evil, because it is a sign that his loyalty to us is sensitive. And if you sin for the mere sake of passing pleasure, you do greater moral wrong than if you had sinned under some great and pressing temptation.

Let the lurid light of this Old Testament tragedy fall upon your sins of omission and of commission, until you learn anew to pray with the publican: "God, be merciful to me a sinner," and, knowing your weakness and waywardness, let your petition daily be—

> Lead me not—for flesh is frail—
> Where fierce trials would assail,
> Leave me not, in darkened hour,
> To withstand the tempter's power.

SECTS UNDER THE OLD AND NEW DISPENSATION.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR E. JOHNSON, M.A.

LUKE XVII. 21.
"The kingdom of God is within you."

WHEN our Lord Jesus Christ began to preach the Kingdom of God in Palestine, there was a variety of opinions on religious and political subjects prevailing in the land. Religion and politics have always been closely related: they are so in our day, they were so then. The very name of "the Kingdom of God" reminds us of the fact. At the same time our Master draws, as we know, a clear distinction between His kingdom and ordinary politics. And it may help us a little more clearly to see what is meant by the Kingdom of God in our day, if we look for a moment into the mirror of that long past time.

First of all, there were the two great sects, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Let us briefly trace their origin. Ezra and Nehemiah had restored the Jewish nationality, and those who, after their death continued their work, were called the Chassidim or "Pious ones." These were universally respected. The conquests of Alexander the Great brought the Greek civilisation into Palestine. The new ideas penetrated to Jerusalem and came into collision with the stricter views of the Chassidim. And when Antiochus Epiphanes endeavoured to impose Greek customs and manners by violence upon the people, there was a revolt, led by a priest, Matatthias, father of the celebrated Judas Maccabæus. The revolt was successful; but the Hellenist Jews, who were few in number, disapproved of it. They did not share the prejudice of the Chassidim towards the foreigners; they were broader and more tolerant, at the same time more sceptical. They received the name—how or why we do not know—of the *Zadokim*, or Sadducees—*i.e.*, *just men*. Perhaps it was given in irony by their opponents. These Sadducees were Conservative in their general tendency; they observed the law and the Mosaic sacrifices. But they

thought the Chassidim too eager and zealous; they did not like the institution of the synagogue, because it was not in the law; and they supported their conservatism with all the influence of wealth and social position. Their growing power led to the break up of the other party. One branch of the Chassidim became separate, and are known as the Essenes, while another determined to oppose the Sadducees, and thenceforth were known as the Perooshim, or Pharisees, *i.e.*, the "Separated Ones." Above all, they separated themselves from Greek culture. "He who teaches his sons Greek," they said, "is as cursed as he who rears swine." And when the Old Testament was translated into Greek by the Septuagint, they said that the day it was done was as unlucky as that on which the Hebrews of old had worshipped the golden calf. However, that did not prevent them from using the Greek translation when they went on their errands by sea and land of making proselytes. To their hatred of Greeks they added hatred of Romans, and of every nation that was not Jewish. The Pharisees gained the day in the end against the Sadducees, that is, the Liberals, or lovers of new ideas against the Conservatives; and the main reason seems to have been that the Pharisees were more in earnest, the Sadducees too worldly, soft, and yielding. Although, in one sense, the Pharisees were the Liberals, it is easy to see that they were, in reality, more conservative of Judaism in its proud and strict exclusion of the Gentile element, than the nominal Conservatives, the Sadducees. In the time of Herod the Great, the vassal of the Roman emperor, the Pharisees took a patriotic stand, while some of the Sadducees bore the reproachful name of Herodians. Again, some of the Pharisees turned their attention to politics, and stirred up the people to revolt, among whom was Judas the Galilean. And when this came to an end, nothing remained for the two parties but to return to their religious discussions in the court of the Temple. The Sadducees had the Temple and the priesthood and the official power, the Pharisees had the Synagogue and the study of the law, and the education of the people in their hands. We have pictures of their quarrels and disputes on the Gospels. Such was the state of things at the birth of Jesus. Now, these great parties have lived on in a sense to the present day. The Pharisees had to abandon their splendid dream of an earthly kingdom that could not be destroyed, when they looked upon the ruins of the Temple, and thought of the golden candlesticks and other precious objects carried to

Rome by Titus. They turned their thoughts to a more spiritual religion —a religion which needed no visible Temple, and no sacrifice, and no holy land: the religion of the synagogue, the religion which has outlived the terrible persecution of so many centuries, and exists, and flourishes among us at the present day. Such has been the spiritual triumph of the Pharisees. Unbending patriots, true successors of the prophets, they put the honour of God before all else: they refused to bend to the stranger, and although they knew beforehand they must succumb in the struggle, they upheld to the end the glory of their religion, willing to perish themselves if only the Law of Jehovah might abide. It has been said that the believing Jews of the nineteenth century are the direct representatives of the Pharisees of the first century: their faith, their practices, and hopes are the same. And, on the other hand, the modern Jew, who believes in riches, and power, and enjoyment: the great financiers and millionaires—the men without belief and without hopes—these are the modern incarnation of triumphant Sadducean. In the Gospels, we see Jesus and his disciples contrasted with these sects of Jews. The Sadducees hated Jesus; it was they who decided on His death. In the Acts we see again the rancour of the same party against the Apostles; and perhaps we shall not be wrong if we say that this was the hatred of worldliness and selfishness against goodness and principle, the hatred of men who had no religion at all against those whose teaching exposed them: the hatred of darkness to the light. We may not speak in anything like so summary a manner of the Pharisees. They were far more numerous than the Sadducees, and there was great variety of character among them. We all remember how our Master denounced their hollowness: but the Talmud does the same. It tells us of seven kinds of Pharisees—the bent Pharisee, who seems to have the Law upon his shoulders; the interested Pharisee, who seemed to ask for money before he would fulfil a precept; the Pharisee with the bleeding forehead, who walked with his eyes shut, and struck his head against the wall rather than look at women; the pretentious Pharisee, who wore a large and flowing robe that he might be noticed; the Pharisee who was working out his salvation, always looking out for a good work to do, that he might do away with his sins; the Pharisee whose motive was fear, and the Pharisee whose motive was love,—who was the best of all. The rest, it was said, were "dyed" Pharisees. Our Master, we know, called them "whited sepulchres," and the Talmud says: "The disciple of wise men

who is not the same within as he is without, is not the disciple of wise men." But they were not all hypocrites; no great party is composed of nothing but hypocrites. On the contrary, the existence of hypocrisy proves the existence of something real and good. There would be no counterfeit coin if there were no genuine money. Hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue, and falsehood to truth. There was a sound core in Pharisaism. Some of the sect attacked Jesus, some admired and sympathised with Him. He went to dine with Pharisees, probably more than once. An eminent Pharisee, Nicodemus, was a secret disciple of His; and when Herod Antipas desired to arrest Jesus, Pharisees interfered to secure His escape. In fact, there were two parties strongly opposed to each other in the bosom of Phariaism, the party of Hillel and the party of Schammai. It is an interesting question how far the teaching of Hillel prepared the way for Christianity; and probably it will be correct to say that at certain points it was in very close sympathy with the spirit of Jesus. There is a well-known anecdote which illustrates this. A heathen went one day to the Master Schammai, and said: "I will embrace Judaism if you can teach me the whole law, while I stand before thee on one foot." And Schammai gave him for all answer, a blow with the stick he held in his hand. Then the heathen went to Hillel and asked the same question. And Hillel answered: "Do not to thy neighbour what thou wouldest not that he should do to thee; that is the sum and substance of the law: the rest is only application and deduction." Other fine sayings of his are quoted: but, on the other hand, he was not free from the childish quibbling of the doctors in general, especially on questions relating to the Sabbath. He was doubtless one of those who strained out the gnat and swallowed the camel, who paid tithe of mint, anise, and cummin; but he was not one of those who altogether left out the weightier matters of the law, temperance, justice, and love.

The grandson of Hillel was Gamaliel, another fine Rabbi, and the teacher of Paul, who has brought much of the best element of Pharisaism, and also a little of its failings, into his view of Christianity. These great doctors were not spiritual dwarfs; and yet the majestic figure of our Master, standing forth from them, makes them look pigmies. They were only narrow pedants, after all. One of Hillel's principles was study—study of the law. That was the one thing needful. An ignorant man,

he said, ought not to be a pious man. If so, we are all of us castaways. Many of us have neither time nor head for study; and those of us who have been studying all our lives feel that we know nothing, though we are always just on the brink of knowing something. There are men now, as then, who would like to turn the world into a great school-room, where the atmosphere is apt to become too close and stifling. How different is the spirit of our Master! He takes us out into the gardens and the fields, into the streets and the market-places, to admire all that is beautiful in nature, and in human nature, because they are the work of a most glorious God and Father. Learned or ignorant, He calls us all to the kingdom, for which simplicity of heart, truth and love are the only qualifications. How Jesus expands, and for the first time makes the rule of conduct truly golden! Hillel and the rest meant by one's neighbour only their fellow Jew. That a Roman, or a Samaritan, or a Syrophenician could be a neighbour; they would have shuddered at the thought. But Jesus founded the universal brotherhood; it exists, it is a fact; and wherever we roam, whether through the dreamy world of letters or through the living world of history, from China to Peru, we may be certain of finding, among yellow and brown and black men, as well as among whites, true members of that spiritual and world-wide kingdom which He proclaimed, and which He devoted Himself even unto death to establish.

Now let us turn to another sect or religious order who had some influence in Palestine at the time of our Master's appearance—the Essenes. These may be, by way of distinction Separatists, Dissenters or Puritans. Their piety was very glowing and exalted, and finding the prevailing Pharisaism too worldly for their views, they retired and formed unions among themselves. They lived chiefly in convents in the oasis of Engedi, on the east side of the Dead Sea. They never went up to Jerusalem; they held the sacrifices there offered in horror, and offered none themselves. They have been compared to the Darbyites of the present day, who are understood to look upon all our churches and sects as alike infected with what is termed "the world." They aimed at perfection in obedience to the law; and, again, they have been termed "exaggerated Pharisees." Contempt for riches was one of their leading principles. They held everything in common—even their meals. Thine is mine, and mine is thine they said. The notion was, that the law of Moses must be observed to the letter; and as this could not be done in this world,

they must need go out of the world and live in the oasis upon dates. They would not go into the cities, because there were statues there, and images stamped upon coins, which they thought forbidden by the law. They lived by rule, took each day a purity or bath, and spent their time between prayer and toil. It seems that they were much endeared to the common people, probably because of their practice of communism. There was at that time, as there is in our time a strong Socialistic movement. We must recollect that the law of Moses, so humane as it is, contains a great deal of what may be called Socialism, in the best sense of the word. It humanely regulates contracts and property, it sets its face against the oppression of the poor by the rich. And now, when the dream of the Messianic times filled all minds and hearts, people were looking forward to a happy state of things, when justice should prevail, the right of all be respected, and earth should again be as a paradise. No wonder, then, that many eyes were turned with respect and affection to these virtuous and charitable monks, who seemed to be the men of the future, whose communism might well spread till it realised the poetical dream. But it was not destined so to be. These four thousand Essenes seem themselves to have been such stuff as dreams are made of, and they vanished away about the year 70, when Jerusalem fell. Exaggerated and extreme opinions, and systems built upon them, are not destined to long life in this world. But how far did our Master sympathise with the Essenes? Probably He met with some of them from time to time, and as with the Pharisees, so with them. He approved much that was good in their teaching. "Blessed are ye poor," He said. "Woe to the rich." "Hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of God." "You cannot serve God and mammon." "Take no thought what ye shall eat or drink." "Sell all you have and give to the poor, and follow me." "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay." These things and other savour of Essenism. And when we try to read and understand our own time in the light of the past, we feel there is not a sect among us distinguished by peculiar opinions or practices, but may earn a good word from our Master. But He is greater than all sects; and when some learned Jews of our time say that He was an Essene, they seem to forget one their fundamental principle, that of being acceptable to God by external observances, was strongly opposed by our Master. One of the things in regard to which we may feel certain is, that He had no sympathy with those extremes we call ritualism and

formalism. He sat down at meat without having bathed, to the great scandal of Pharisees and Essenes, and he said: "it is not that which goeth into the mouth of a man which renders him impure, but that which comes forth from his mouth." And this was striking at the root of Essenism. Moreover, the Essenes loved mystery, and would not impart the best teaching to the vulgar many, but only to the select few: while Jesus loved to teach in the open air, and in simple and popular language to the multitude. After his departure, the Essenes continued to exercise some influence; probably many were converted to Christianity, it is thought probable that James, brother of our Lord, was both Essenian and Christian. Communism was practised at Jerusalem, under an outburst of enthusiastic love. But the result seems to have been what we believe would certainly be the result if our modern socialists had their way, and that is, an increase of the very evils they were seeking to remove. At any rate, we read frequently afterwards of the poverty of the saints of Jerusalem, and of the collections that had to be made on their behalf.

These sects then have passed away: while that sect which was once everywhere spoken against, and was long regarded by the Romans as neither more nor less than another variety of Jewish opinion, is now the religion of the mightiest peoples in the world. Christianity has had a long and wonderful history. Under divine providence the Jew, the Greek, and the Roman have all contributed to its stock of ideas, and to the different shapes it has assumed in the world. Much we owe to the Jews, especially to the Pharisees, of whom the greatest and most famous was Saul, afterwards called Paul. Very much we owe to the Greek, whose intellectual power has never been surpassed, and who early contrived to wed his philosophy to Christianity. Some of the early Greek Christians saw clearly enough that their great sages were in close sympathy with the spirit of Christ ages before He came into the world. Finally, the Roman adopted our religion, and, through his influence, much of the old Paganism, partly for good and partly for evil, flowed into and mingled with the stream of Christian tradition.

Three hundred years ago our fathers revolted from Rome, and endeavoured to find their way back to a simple Christianity—to the truth as it is in Jesus. And in that endeavour Protestantism has broken into a number of churches and sects. And the endeavour must still go on. It

we trace a Divine mind, a Divine Providence in the whole of this great history, we shall come to the conclusion that, as diversity belongs to all life, so it belongs to a living and a Divine religion, and also that this diversity is the expression of something that is one and undivided at the core. What is the religion of Jesus? Can it be better summed up than those great words, "The kingdom of God is within you"? The intoxicating dream of the time was of a kingdom without, visible, splendid, including the recovery of the land, and victory, and vengeance over the heathen. From the first our Master waved that dream aside, and presently declared—what was in the last degree shocking and scandalous to the Jews—that He, the Messiah, must pass His life in holiness, and die the death of a malefactor in devotion to his brethren, and obedience to the Will of God. His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, founded in our affections. A few great words—Faith, Freedom, Love, sum up its doctrines and its spirit. Faith, as opposed to that rigid obedience to the law preached by the Pharisee, the attempt to fulfil which brought such agony and almost despair to the soul of Paul and Luther; faith, which means conscience and will ever ready to recognise and receive the holy and the divine, and which lifts us out of self-condemnation, and to which every sin is pardonable, except the sin against the spirit, against the light, which confounds good with evil, and turns the truth of God within us into a lie. Freedom, not an idle sense of absoluteness, which cannot belong to human beings, but as opposed to all servility to others: freedom from the yoke of mere tradition; freedom to follow our own perceptions of the right and the true till they are proved to be false, comparing them with those of others, but never permitting another's conscience to tyrannise over ours: freedom that we must always strive to win more of, and be more worthy of, freedom that can only be ours as we know and relish truth for truth's sake. And love—that love which is expressed not only in the solemn exhortation of our Master, but by the beautiful sacraments which he has given us—the participation of the common loaf and cup, the holy kiss, the washing of one another's feet. If some of these we do not practise to the letter, all the more diligently let us meditate on their spirit, and see how they are all reflections of the one Sacrament of sacraments, Himself, His Holy Spirit received with ours, our life rooted and built up in His.

The kingdom is within us. The truth will stand amidst all the changes which man's thoughts about Christ will yet undergo. Sects will pass away, and those that remain will pass through silent changes; kingdoms of this

world will fall and rise, all things will be shaken, except those which can not be shaken, but must remain, as long as nature remains. That human nature has radically changed since the days of our Master, it would be idle to assert; that it has been greatly leavened and improved it would be blind and ungrateful to deny. For the monument of progress in sanity and in salvation are all around us; and all progress may be traced, directly or indirectly, to freedom in the intellect and love in the heart, ever extending their bounds, ever overcoming some dark obstacle of superstition and of hate once thought insurmountable. May that leaven continue to work in all hearts, and may the kingdom that is within us prove its peaceful and Divine origin and destiny by the vigour and cheerfulness of our service to one another, and by good hopes for all time and eternity.

Yet one word more. We live in a time of great sifting of opinions and of great disquiet of conscience. And that will continue until we have discovered the true ground on which our religion and our faith must rest, and abandon for ever the artificial and crumbling foundations laid in opinions that shift from age to age. The true foundation is Christ, not the Christ of an unintelligible theology, but the Christ who represents and expresses all that is holy and beautiful in our moral perceptions, all that is universal in the conscience and the heart, the undying aspirations of mankind. Then we shall not be disturbed by the loss of old opinions, but with one of the sweetest Christian poets of our time, who sings serenely in his mellow age, we, too, shall sing—

> The tree of faith its bare, dry boughs must shed,
> That nearer heaven the living ones may climb.
> * * * * *
> Our time's unrest—an angel sent of God,
> Troubling with life the waters of the world.
> * * * * *
> Therefore I trust, although to outward sense,
> Both true and false seem threatened; I will hold
> With nearer light my reverence for the old,
> And calmly wait the births of Providence.
> No gain is lost; the clear-eyed saints look down
> Untroubled on the wrecks of schemes and creeds;
> Love yet remains, its rosary of good deeds
> Counting in task-field and o'er peopled town;
> Truth has charmed life; the Inward Word survives,
> And day by day its revelation brings;
> Faith, Hope, and Charity, whatsoever things
> Which cannot be shaken stand. Still holy lives
> Reveal the Christ of whom the letter told,
> And the new Gospel verifies the old.

THE MESSAGE OF MUSIC TO THE SOUL.

BY THE REV. CANON KNOX-LITTLE.

From a Sermon preached in Worcester Cathedral during a Musical Festival.

WHATEVER the message of the music may be, music is a gift the highest, the most glorious. But what is the message of music? For any saying of prophet or apostle to bring a message to the human heart, three ingredients are necessary. For there are messages that belong to classes and peculiarities of individuals, and there are messages that belong to mankind. Now, a message for mankind must be enabled first of all to answer three questions.

1. What is its pathos? What is the pathos of music? It is this, like the withering grass and like the fading flower, it is beautiful, but soon it is gone. Spohr, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Handel take the common sounds—they put them to lofty uses. But, however beautiful, however moving, suddenly and it is gone. The pathos of music is like the withering grass and the fading flower, however beautiful, it draws to a close. There is one power in beauty that thrills us; it is its passing character, its fading life; and that very pathos wakens us to the perception how great is His goodness, how great is His beauty. For the best and the brightest that we know on our mortal pilgrimage, as its best, as its brightest, tells us how great is that that knows no ending, and that is God. The pathos of music is not only that it ends so swiftly, but also that it speaks to us of a world of mystery which we only touch for a moment and then which vanishes away. How sad it is to some of us that the sensations of music cannot abide sometimes an hour beyond the sound. Why, ye musicians, remember as the throne of Tyre was set between the sands and the sea, so the lordly art that illustrates God's worship this week in this cathedral is set on the border land between sensation and the soul. And what can divide anything between them? Our best affections are side by side with our most disastrous passions, and music thrills the sensuous nature:

but if we will, through sensation, it thrills the soul. Let us remember that in every life there is music, a chamber of sound! There comes a moment when death or sin or sorrow makes that life a frightful pause: is it to end after the pause in discord, or is it to end in the harmonies of heaven?

2. What is the danger of music? Ah! you musicians on that orchestra, you choir that sing God's glory in this stately Cathedral day by day, can you believe that there is danger in your glorious art? Your science of music may be a science of sensation. There are your modern apostles of culture, and what do they teach? They teach that man is in an ascending scale, and that he has advanced from point to point, not by that which we Christians call the grace of God, but by art, by culture. The danger of music—it may vibrate through your nerves, touch and quicken and stimulate your passions, raise you up to an excitement that is beyond the ordinary level of ordinary life. What then? There have been musicians, very possibly are now, greatly gifted with power of hand, of heart, of brain, who are yet the miserable victims of mortal sin. Do not be deluded into the thought that the most glorious art that God has given you can regenerate your nature or purify your souls. There is a materialism which is not the coarsest, there is a vagueness of the idea which is not the most evidently flimsy; but that materialism is worse than the coarsest, and that flimsiness of idea is more deluding than the purest expression of merely mental thought, because it steals God's robes to enwrap it; and modern culture and the apostles of modern teaching steal in music, above all, the very clothing of the Eternal for the purpose of enwrapping mortal sin. Oh, ye apostles of what is called beauty, in an age that forgets the Divine presence and the power of the grace of God, never allow yourselves in music or in other things to take the part of a divorce court between those whom God has indissolubly joined together—Goodness and Beauty. If ye love the beauty of the song He has given you, love that which makes it beautiful, the goodness of God. What is the power of music? Do you doubt it? Those who sit on the orchestra will not doubt it. If you doubt the power of music read the life of Mendelssohn, read his letters. Read the life of Beethoven, the life of Spohr. Ask yourselves why the great musicians have suffered so acutely, though they left you such a heritage of joy. I suppose that Mendelssohn was the most joyous musician that ever lived. That sweet, pure heart, that lucid mind, that tender

affection, that appreciation so humble, so sensitive of all that was good—of course, it must have had joy. And yet you cannot listen to the *Elijah*, especially the second part, without realising the tremendous sorrow that swept through that pure life. And when you turn to Beethoven and Spohr you find not only sorrow, but the agony and the anguish of a disappointed ambition, and the agony and the anguish of a suffering that seemed to know no end. How much it costs to make a poet out of a man! Read Mrs. Browning's poem upon that and you will begin to understand it; and then ask yourself how much it costs to make a musician. Why? Suffering and sorrow are the ways of life. Suffering and trouble are the steps of genius, but at least they are the witnesses of power. And so I submit that I have a foundation for my question; if I ask broadly what is the message of music, I have a right to ask distinctly what is its power? This week, if you will, this stately music in this stately place may be a power to you. Why music! I defy the apostles of culture, who are the apostles of Satan, with their mortal sins and their vile loves, and their exaltation of passion, and their clothing in robes of glory of the world, the flesh, and the devil, I defy them to contradict, and, contradicting, to prove. The power of music is this—it witnesses that man is a fallen being. It reminds us of a better world. It reminds us that it is possible to feel, possible to enter into sensations, possible to enjoy—oh, my God, how terrible to think of it! possible to do all that, and yet be cruel, hardhearted, untrue, impure—possible not to act. It reminds us that we have about us a touch of divinity, but that the robe of divinity has trailed through the mire. It reminds us that there was a better world, to which we belonged, that we are fallen creatures, but not ghostly relics, capable of regeneration, and then of strengthening, and then of building up to the stature of Christ. That is its power. Music tells us to aspire. It reminds us that it is worth enlisting in the army of God. We all know that in music there is harmony, and that is a message of the beauty of God. The harmony in music pointed to the eternal claim, the indefeasible call, the unbroken voice, the uncontradicted statement of the moral law. They might say that was abstract and cold. What was the outcome of the moral law? What was the result of Mendelssohn learning to play his songs on the spinet or the piano? The result was the *Elijah*. What was the result of Spohr's weeping tears as he straggled over the difficulties of his violin, trying the hundredth of a sound where

others had tried the half?. The result was such stately harmonies as the great prelude to his *Last Judgment*. And what was the moral law? The science of doing right; and the great artist and exponent of that science was Christ. It was impossible every moment to remember God's presence, but it was possible to keep their festival in a religious sense, and to do their best to make it an act of worship and an act of praise. Their music would only be blessed when it was the expression of a splendid life. Beauty was the expression of goodness, and if it was not the expression of goodness then eternal beauty it was not. All that is beautiful, if it be externally beautiful, must rest upon eternal goodness. They should take the beauty out of their music and try to live it in their lives. Let them in Cherubini's Mass meditate upon the Blessed Sacrament, in the *Elijah* let them meditate upon the consolations and the claims of God, in the *Messiah* upon His tenderness and compassion, and so on: in one word, let them make sweet music in their festival and in their lives.

Be good, dear friends, and let who will be clever,
Do noble things, not dream them all day long;
And so make life, death, and that vast forever
One grand sweet song.

EVERYTHING TURNED TO GOLD.

A SERMON TO CHILDREN.

BY THE REV. JAMES LEGGE, M. A.

JOB XXVIII, 6.

"It hath dust of gold." Or, as in margin of R. V., "He winneth lumps of gold."

NONE of you, I dare say, have ever been in a mine from which coal or iron or copper is obtained. I once descended into a coal mine, the shaft of which was five hundred yards deep. It was a very strange experience. It gave me power to understand the dangers, the privations, and the pathos of the miner's life as I never did before. Every now and again we read terrible stories of fatal explosions in these deep, far away regions. Only a few days ago, in this manner, nearly eighty people, in a Welsh mine, were suddenly killed. But explosions of fiery gases are not the miner's only peril. The choke damp is more deadly than the flame. Sometimes water bursts into the pit, and drowns the workers. Sometimes the roof falls in, and buries them. Sometimes the ventilation goes wrong, and stifles them. Sometimes the machinery breaks, and dashes them to pieces down the shaft. But were they secure from all these dangers, their lot would still be hard. They work in the dark, sunless underground, their life a perpetual night. Often they spend long hours in a constrained, crouching posture plying their task. By the dim ray of their safety lamps they grope along dark, low, and narrow passages to their stalls, where they work, often alone, for hours. It is dreary, dangerous, sorrowful employment. It is only made tolerable by man's wonderful power of adapting himself to all conditions, and by habit which becomes a second nature. Think of this when you gather round the ruddy fire. The coals by which you are warmed and made comfortable are won always by hard and dreary labour, and often by the sacrifice of precious life.

This chapter in Job describes with all a poet's force and beauty the

miner's life in its loneliness, its dangers and its triumphs. You must read the chapter in the Revised Version to understand it properly. It describes the miner braving danger and working marvel of engineering skill in his search for gold or silver or precious stones. It tells how he breaks open the deep shaft and swings down to his work in the mine below. He lights up the gloom and makes an end of darkness with his candle or lantern. He works there, and men passing overhead forget the busy toiler below. The keen-eyed vulture has never seen his haunts nor the fierce lion braved their solitudes. He cuts channels for the water to run away, and lands up the roof to keep the water from trickling in. He puts forth his hand and shatters flinty rocks, blasting them with explosives, and discovering the hidden sapphires and the dust or lumps of gold, for his eye is quick to see every precious thing.

Even in these old days, somewhere near the time of Solomon, when it is supposed this book was written, men endured all this toil, and faced all these dangers, to win the hidden gold or precious stones. And from then till now men have ever been eager to find gold. The passion for gold is one of the strongest in the human heart. It has done much to shape the world's history. It has given us new arts, new sciences, and new industries. It has made solitary places populous, and filled empty lands with busy multitudes.

I am old enough to remember the excitement that filled England and Scotland when a great discovery of gold was made in one of our Australian Colonies. It was in 1851. I can remember listening to my father reading accounts of the wonderful fortunes which men acquired, sometimes in a day. A single stroke of a pickaxe sometimes discovered a great mass of gold just under the earth's surface. Men who had not a shilling in the world one day were worth thousands of pounds the next. For, at first, the gold discovered in Australia was near the earth's surface, now it is mostly got from mines, some of them deep in the earth. The excitement caused by this discovery of gold was very great. It became a kind of madness, firing the imagination and kindling the passions of multitudes. Thousands of young men emigrated, hoping for speedy wealth, but many went only to suffer bitterest disappointment. It was the many who failed, the few who succeeded.

Now, why is gold so coveted? For one thing it is very rare. Since earliest times it had been esteemed the most precious and sacred of all metals.

Again, gold has many properties peculiar to itself. You know it is beautiful, bright, and glistening, and deep yellow in colour. It is used in the arts for decoration as you may see in many of the lovely Christmas cards you have lately received. Then it is very durable. If you expose a sheet of hardest iron to the rain and air it will soon be coated over with rust. If you leave it long enough exposed it will crumble gradually into a fine red powder. But gold is not wasted or changed in that way. No—and strong acids, that eat out great holes in silver or copper or iron, are powerless to affect gold. But the principal reason of the high esteem for gold, is just because it is the chief means of exchange between buyers and sellers. If you have gold enough you can buy any merchandise you like, clothes, or books, or pictures, or houses, or lands. Some things gold, precious as it is, cannot buy. It cannot buy wisdom, it cannot buy knowledge, it cannot buy goodness. But everything you eat or drink or wear gold will purchase; so you see why it is passionately coveted. Its possession means power to acquire all worldly good. But you cannot understand the eagerness, the devotion, the passion with which people toil and have, and sometimes sin and commit crimes to obtain gold.

Now, I am going this morning to tell you a secret. It is a thing which people would give all they have to know. Once indeed there was a time when people spent their whole lives and all their fortunes, trying to find out this secret. But they failed and failed utterly. The secret I am going to tell you is—*How to turn everything into gold.*

Now, I think, I see the older people pricking up their ears and saying: "Ah! this *is* practical preaching! How to turn everything into gold! Grand subject for a New Year's sermon! Good news indeed!"

But now, children, I speak to you. Remember what I said, gold cannot buy. With no amount of gold could you purchase wisdom, goodness, love, or truth. I once saw in the Crystal Palace a great gilded pyramid. It represented the bulk of gold exported from Australia in ten years, between 1851 and 1861. It was a huge pyramid, 10 feet square at the base, and 45 feet high. What a mass of gold that represented! Millions and millions of pounds' worth! But if any of you had all that gold in your possession, and were willing to pay it all for wisdom and goodness, you could not buy them so. No! the poorest child might be richer than you in wisdom and goodness, though you possessed all the gold in the world.

Let me say, also, that happiness cannot be bought with gold. Many

people think otherwise, and hope if they become rich enough to be perfectly happy. It is a great mistake. Let me tell you an old, old story. Once a man was so greedy for gold—though he was already very rich—that he asked the gods, in whom the world once believed, for power to turn into gold everything he touched. After some delay his prayer was granted. One morning he woke and found himself possessed of the coveted gift. With what joy he used it. Whatever he touched became pure gold. He touched the bedstead, and its great pillars became solid gold. He touched the table, and it became beautiful shining gold. He touched the candelabra and ornaments in the room, and they were all turned instantly into gold. Just then, when his heart was beating fast with joy, and he was thinking to himself: "Now I'm the happiest and richest man on earth!" his little daughter, whom he dearly loved, came into the room. That morning she had found her pet bird dead in its cage. She was filled with sorrow, and the tears trickled down her face as she came to tell her father and be comforted. "Oh, father"—she said, and as he put his hand on her beautiful young head she suddenly stopped. The father looked down, and there, to his consternation and grief—there, where his lovely, living daughter had been, stood a lifeless figure of gold. The lips were yet parted, a tear stood on her cheek, in her hand the cage, with the dead bird—all dead, a lifeless statue of gold, beautiful, but cold and dead! The father's lust for gold had slain his beloved daughter! Ay, more. The man found he could touch the hand of no dear friend without turning him into a heartless image. The gift he had so coveted proved most fatal. It shut him off from all sympathy and fellowship with men. The world for him became a gilded prison, not a bit more tolerable because gilded. So, you see, gold by itself cannot bring happiness, but may bring misery instead.

Well, now you will understand me. My secret is not to teach how you may possess so fatal a gift as that miserable millionaire obtained. I do not mean that everything can be turned into gold in that literal sense. Yet I do say you can turn everything into gold in a better and higher sense. Some people, though poor, are as happy as if all gold was theirs. They may wear no jewelry, but they have the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in God's sight of great price, and is lovelier than sparkling diamond or glittering gold. Their purses may never be very full, but their hearts always are of faith and love. Plain and inexpensive

may be their garments, but they are clothed with "incorruptible apparel," truth, honour and integrity. They are always bright, and have a cheery smile and a kindly word for all in trouble. Now, such people have found the secret of turning everything to gold. I want you to be one of them, and to learn their secret.

What is this secret? How is it possible to turn everything to gold? Listen. "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." When Paul wrote these words he meant he had learned a secret—been initiated into a mystery. He had learned so to love the heavenly Father's will, so to trust Him, that all care and fear and darkness had fled out of life and left it touched with perpetual golden light. And that is the secret that all men know who can turn things to gold. To them

> All that God blesses is their good;
> All unblest good is ill;
> And all is right that seems most wrong,
> If it be His sweet Will.

How much happiness do little boys and girls miss by being discontented. Tom thinks Henry has got a larger apple than himself, and can't enjoy what he has. Mary thinks Ethel has a more beautiful dress than her own, and is in the sulks. Yet, if their own hearts were right, Tom's apple would be sweet, and Mary's dress very neat. It's Tom's heart, and not his apple, that is sour! It's Mary's temper, and not her dress, that is in tatters! Oh, how foolish and mistaken we are to make ourselves unhappy because others are better off than we. Let me tell you a parable, which I cannot remember having seen anywhere, though it may have been suggested by something I have read. Once a poor man lived in a little cottage, humble, but pretty. Honeysuckle climbed round the door, sweet flowers bloomed in the garden, and wee children, with rosy cheeks and bright eyes, ran out and in, shouting and playing merrily. But near the cottage was a great mansion where the lord of the manor lived. It was a splendid building. Marble steps led up to the entrance, and beautiful pillars of polished granite guarded the doorway, and glittering pinnacles seemed to prick into the sky. The cottager had to pass this grand house every day as he went to work, and his heart was filled with bitterness. "Why," said he, "should I be doomed to live in so small a cottage, while this man dwells in a lordly palace? It's not fair." The poor man was making life wretched with such thoughts. One day, when these

repinings were specially bitter within him, he saw standing in the path a beautiful figure with long shining white garments. It was an angel; who beckoned to the man and said: "Come with me," "Yes," said the man; for he thought so beautiful a being could do him no hurt. He gave his hand to the angel, and they immediately began to ascend. Up and up and up through the still clear air they went. Up and up till, looking down, the man saw the streams like silver threads, and the fields like squares in a mosaic, and everything seemed getting smaller and smaller. By and-by they paused, and the angel said: "You have been unhappy because you live in so small a cottage, while your neighbour's mansion is so grand." "Yes, I don't think it is fair." "Well," said the angel, "I want to show you how little difference, after all, there is between your house and his. Now look down." "But where," said the man: "I can't see the houses at all." "Yes, there," said the angel; "those two small dots." "What those!" said the man. "Why one is just like a pin head, and the other like a pin point!" "Yes," said the angel; "and that's all the difference. And all earthly differences are very small when you look at them from a sufficient elevation." When the angel brought back the man to earth he walked to his cottage with new feelings. He heard his children's laughter, and it thrilled him like angel voices. The clustering honey-suckle seemed lovelier than the richest stone carvings. The gleam of his garden flowers excelled the flash of polished granite, and their fragrance filled his soul with rapture. He had learned a secret which put an end to all his murmuring, and revealed new joy and beauty in his humble home. And if we looked at life's inequalities from angel heights our discontent would also vanish, and golden beams of heavenly light would make all things lovely and joyous.

But you have not learned all the secret yet. You must not only love and trust God, but be loving, forgiving, and unselfish, in regard to your fellows. I am sure, no angry, jealous, or vindictive temper will see much brightness in life. Instead, it will fill the sky with leaden coloured clouds. But as sunrise suffuses the darkest clouds with golden glory, so does a forgiving spirit brighten the sky of the heart. There is much need for the exercise of forgiveness. Jesus said, "It must needs be that offences come." Why "needs be"? You live in a world disordered, where sin has broken God's order. If you stood by a

machine whose wheels were whirling wildly without control, you would hasten away lest you got injured. But you *are* standing in a world where passion and anger and hatred have broken loose, and so often cause you hurt. But when your brothers vex you, or your little friends do something mean or unkind to you, if you can then, instead of seeking to return the wrong, be forgiving, and loving—you will have a golden crown, the crown of the self-conqueror. In your heart will be deep peace. You will find mercy's double blessing. "It is twice blest: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes." In like manner every unselfish deed will bring you a gladness such as you can never express in words. Do not think of self first. Do not let your own pleasure be your only consideration. Think of father, mother, sisters and brothers, and live for them and serve them. That will fill your life with joys "divine and golden," that will give you treasures which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and which cannot be stolen by any thief.

Suppose you had been invited to a Christmas-party, where was to be a grand Christmas-tree loaded with lovely presents. You would be delighted, and long for the time to come. But if that very Christmas Day, your dear mother was taken seriously ill, and wanted some one to stay with her—would you do it, could you do it? It would be very hard to think of the gay company, and the tree sparkling with lights, and the whip or the ball or the top which you might have received, but which would now be given to another. Could you give up all for mother's sake? If you could, I am sure no boy's heart in all England, that Christmas Day would be gladder, happier or more joyous than yours. That is what Jesus did continually. He pleased not Himself. He denied Himself. He went about doing good, caring for others and making them glad. He sought the Father's will. He was gentle, loving, and forgiving. And His heart was ever a Temple of praise—a sanctuary of sweet peace—a still lake unruffled by passion, where the clear heavens mirrored themselves, and the stars were reflected with golden beams. All I have been saying sums itself up in this—Love Christ and follow Him. And amid all change, temptation, and sorrow, you will find life gilded with eternal and unchanging beauty: you will have discovered the secret—how to turn everything to gold.

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

BY THE REV. CANON LIDDON, D. D.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday afternoon, Dec. 7, 1884.

St. Luke ix. 26.

"Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels."

The teaching of our Lord and Saviour is for all nations and for all time. But some of His words are especially needed at one period of the Church's history and some at another. It is with the Christian Church as with the individual Christian. The sides of truth which attract attention, which touch conscience, which mould character, vary within limits as we pass from childhood to manhood, and from manhood to old age.

Now let us see how this bears on the solemn truth referred to by our Lord in the passage before us, the truth of the last judgment. And observe that we are not discussing the Day of Judgment in its relation to the heathen or unbelieving world. That is, indeed, a tremendous subject full of solemn, lofty, far-reaching, unfathomable mystery, traversed by bright gleams of light, traversed assuredly by awful shades, but practically less important to you and to me than the relation of the day of judgment to Christians. If we consider our Lord's sayings on this last subject, we shall find that there are three main failures, so to call them, for which Christians will be condemned at the day of account. Of these failures (if we may so gently describe them) the first is disobedience—conscious, wilful disobedience to the Gospel law. I say to the Gospel law. We are naturally so attracted by the Gospel as a revelation of free grace and mercy that we too often forget another aspect of it: we forget that it, too, after its own manner, is a law. Yes; Christ is a higher and a greater lawgiver than was Moses, and His Gospel is a more exacting, because a more spi-

itual code than that in the Pentateuch. It is a law of liberty, no doubt, because the Christian soul, illuminated and fortified by grace, may freely and joyfully embrace and obey it, because in Christ's household obedience is not wrung out of unassisted and reluctant nature by the sole force of penal sanctions. But it is not a law of licence. The Christian justified is not free to be and to do whatever his lower nature may desire. The Christian may not sin that grace should abound: and the Sermon on the Mount is just as much a part of the everlasting Gospel as is the parable of the prodigal son,—the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans just as much as the third, the fourth, the fifth.

Now, this lofty, pure, spiritual law is the standard by which we Christians shall be judged—judged all the more certainly because, unlike the ancient Jews, we have been endowed with grace—that is to say, with infused spiritual light and force for the very purpose of enabling us to obey it. Surely it greatly concerns us Christians to bear in mind. Our Lord teaches that all judgment will be relative to the opportunities which men have enjoyed—"That to whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." "And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes." "In that day of Judgment it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for Chorazin and Bethsaida." Some of the early Christians at Corinth and elsewhere who had been under St. Paul's teaching, and who had altogether misunderstood it, could not believe that they were thus under a moral and spiritual law. They thought that their new law of liberty consisted in a general licence to be and to do just what they liked, provided only that they experienced, from time to time, the emotions of faith and love which are right, and, indeed, indispensable in a true Christian. The Apostle will not let them dream that fatal dream undisturbed. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God." And, again, to some Galatians who shared the illusion, "Be not deceived," he says, "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." And so,

also, our Lord, foresaw that because works of mercy had been catalogued and manipulated among the later Jews, as if they could be weighed and measured by a mechanical formalism, therefore they would be afterwards discredited by the selfishness and sloth that is always resident in human nature among His own followers and under a pretence of a loyalty to a lofty kind of spirituality. When He describes the day of judgment, who are, according to his representation, the lost? They are simply Christians —Christians who have failed to obey the Gospel law of charity; they have not tended Christ's person in the various forms of human suffering. "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: I was sick, and ye visited Me not." "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

And the second failure for which Christians will be condemned at the Day of Judgment is that of false and merely outward profession. Our Lord's teaching is full of warning on this score. We may take as a sample the great passage in the Sermon on the Mount in which He contrasts the practical religion of many a Jew in His day with that of a sincere servant of God. He reviews the three main departments of religious effort —duty to other men, duty to God, duty to self. He begins with alms-giving, which stands here for all the duties of charity towards our neighbours. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly." And then he goes on to prayer, which here stands for all the duties of worship, reverence, and devotion, which we owe to Almighty God. "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." And lastly, he takes fasting, which here represents every effort

to place the lower instincts of our nature in subjection to the illuminated conscience, so as to preserve in a composite being like man that settled order and harmonious subordination of matter to the spirit in which man's true excellence consists. "When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Here we note in each instance that an act good in itself is rendered wholly worthless by an unworthy motive. One motive only befits true Christian action, the glory or will of God. The true Christian gives alms and prays and fasts because God wills it, and simply with an eye to his will. When this motive is lost sight of, and the desire to have praise of men takes its place when alms are given to secure a reputation for liberality, when prayers are said to secure a reputation for piety, when fasting is practised to secure a reputation for self-denial, then let us be quite sure of it all is radically evil. The heart is eaten out of the good action by this impure and vicious desire for the praise of men. At the same time, those who do thus give alms, or pray, or fast, do beyond all doubt get a certain return for their expenditure; they get exactly what they seek; they seek human praise, and they have human praise; they have nothing further to look for; they have no right to complain if nothing further awaits them. As our Lord says more emphatically than severely, "They have their reward."

And this suggests a distinct view of the effect and operation of the Day of Judgment. The Day of Judgment will be a great day of discovery: it will unveil before all eyes secret and unsuspected excellence, and secret and unsuspected holiness. As the Apostle says, "Some men's sins are often beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise, also, the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." Now, this aspect of the Day of Judgment is especially needed in times and places where religion confessedly enjoys social ascendancy, and where, therefore, the motives for insincere profession are particularly urgent. Look at Italy, for instance, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, when the great literary and intellectual movement which is known as the Renaissance had eaten out all true Christian faith in the souls of numbers of educated Italians. These

men thought, felt, and so far as they dared, talked and wrote like Pagans, but the Church was everywhere around them, strong with the accumulated strength of centuries, reigning to all appearance in an unshaken and unassailable supremacy, too secure to be much alarmed at sundry faint and distant mutterings of a coming storm, which in the next century would break with awful emphasis beyond the Alps; too secure to be anxious at the disintegrating influences which surrounded, nay, rather, which deeply penetrated and pervaded her; careful to insist upon the traditional proprieties, upon the etiquette, as we may call it, of religious language and action, and for the most part letting other things take their course. That was a situation in which insincere religious profession abounded as a matter of course, in which money was given, and prayers were repeated, and austerity was paraded, with a view to satisfying a conventional standard of requirement, and thereby securing the favourable, or, at least, escaping the unfavourable verdict of contemporary society. All such professions had their reward in personal safety and comfort, if not in social consideration and applause. They had their reward, but they also had to await the final verdict of Him who sees in secret.

And the same thing is observable in our own day within the limits of many a small and compact and humble religious clique, every member of which is known to and carefully watched by all the others. The members of such a clique are associated upon the basis of and in loyalty to a certain religious standard, whether of faith or conduct; and profession of this standard, whether by word or deed, is indispensable as a condition of membership. How often in such a situation are not words used or observances complied with only to avoid scandal, only as men speak, to set a good example, only to encourage others when there is within distrust, questioning, perhaps aversion, certainly not joyous compliance with what is believed to be Divine will! Nor may I forget in this connection to remind at least myself of what is, in fact, a standing danger for all who wear Christ's livery as ministers of His Church. By the very terms of our profession we, the clergy, are bound to use in public sacred language, bound to perform sacred rites, bound to maintain before men a certain language and demeanour. St. Paul says at least as much as this in his instructions to Timothy. And the clergyman is expected, even by those who reject what he has to teach, to be true to the standard of his sacred office. Yet who that knows anything of human weakness can fail to see

how easily that outward bearing and language, so necessary, so indispensable, may become a very mask to which nothing truly corresponds within? Great indeed is our need to fix our attention less on the standard which the Church exacts and which the world expects from us than on the motives of sincere and generous love which should inspire and should prompt it, than on the secret faults of will and temper and indulgence which may so easily render it worthless before God. Great need have we, great need have all of us whose duty it is to maintain an outward standard of conduct and language before the eyes of other men, to think often and anxiously of that great day when nothing that is covered shall not be revealed, and hidden that shall not be known.

And this brings us to the third failure of which Christians will be condemned in the Day of Judgement—the failure to profess the truth of which they are secretly convinced. Of this our Lord mainly speaks in the passage before us: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." This clearly is the failure which men make at times when Christians are in a minority or when earnest Christianity is powerfully opposed. There is no temptation to be ashamed of Christ when all the world around you is, at any rate professedly, praying to Him, praising Him, generally devoted to Him. But the temptation was a very formidable one when His Church was still young, and when Christians carried their lives in their hands; when the authority of all that has weight among mankind, of rank, of wealth, of learning, of power was ranged in opposition to the faith; when, in order to make a stand, a man had to be very sure of his ground, sure of the truth and sure of the vital import of the convictions which sustained him. Wonderful it is how, in those first ages of the faith, men and women, boys and girls, in all conditions of life, joyfully accepted a painful death rather than be disloyal to their Lord and Saviour. Of the extant records of those martyrdoms, some, no doubt, are the work of the collectors of the vague and decaying traditions of a later age; but others have on them the unmistakable stamp of genuineness as rough reports drafted at the time, so brief are they, so simple, so rude in expression, so indifferent to anything like literary effect. It is the same story over and over again. First, the popular suspicion of what was described as "the crime of Christianity," and then the denunciation, and then the arrest, and then the trial before the supe-

rior officer: the summons to sacrifice to the genius of the emperor, the refusal, the official expostulation, the second refusal, the threats more and more terrifying, in order to break down what seemed to be merely an irrational obstinacy, and then the final triumph of conscience, which calmly and deliberately accepts the worse rather than be false to truth; and then the last dark scenes of agony, until all is closed in death. So it was with many a humble Christian whose name yet lingers in the calendar; so it was with deacons like Lawrence, and with virgins like Agnes, and with youths like St. Pancras, and with soldiers like Sebastian. Jesus their Saviour had trodden the way of sorrows, and these bright souls, clothed in the white robes of His righteousness, follow the Lamb withersoever He goeth, follow Him on the path of suffering, follow Him on the road to glory.

It was otherwise when the Church had conquered society and when general opinion had rallied to the side which it had lately persecuted and denounced; and then there were long ages through which, however Christians might differ from one another, none would be ashamed to own the name which on earth as in heaven was now set above every name. But the wheel of time brings strange revolutions, and we live in circumstances when this can no longer be said with entire truth. In every country of Christendom, our own certainly not excepted, there is now a section of people which altogether rejects the name and words of Christ, not merely in practice but professedly. Those of us who can remember anything of educated society even thirty years ago in England must be alive to the change which has taken place in this respect. It may not be all loss; it may be that hollow and enforced profession has but revealed itself as what it really was all along in the rejection of truths which it is no longer socially worth a man's while to profess. But, however this may be, such a change clearly imposes on Christians the duty of confessing Christ before men more exclusively than in days when there were none who openly challenged His claim. It throws out into sharp relief the original meaning of the saying, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He shall come in His glory and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." Ashamed of Jesus Christ! Who of us in his higher and better moments does not indignantly repel the thought that such a perversion of the moral emotion of shame, the servant and guardian of virtue, should even be possible? Could it be that a feeling

which in a healthy condition of the soul never emerges except when conscience reports, or when other men detect in us some voluntary association with known evil, is called forth by the association of our faith and hope and love with Him who is the perfect moral being, the very prime and flower of the human family? There are moments of elevated feeling, moments of unusually clear insight, when many a man might say with the ecstatic apostle, "Though I should die with Thee, yet I will not deny Thee." No pressure, as it seems at those times of pure, lofty enthusiasm—no pressure excited on the heart and will, no bodily torture, no anguish of soul could avail to make a Christian whom Christ has washed with His blood and sanctified by His spirit and enriched with His Divine example ashamed of Him. "God forbid," he cries, "that I should glory save in the crown of our Lord Jesus Christ?" And yet what is the fact? Are there no workshops, no offices, in this metropolis where young men meet day by day, and where to avow serious faith in Jesus Christ, God and Man, our example, our crucified and risen Saviour, requires a courageous effort—are there none where such an avowal would be encountered, if not put down by a fierce scowl, almost by violence? And are there no drawing rooms, no clubs where men of cultivated minds meet and confer, and where the frank confession that a man simply believes what St. Paul believed would provoke a gesture of measured surprise, a delicate curl of the lip, a gentle shrug of the shoulder, a scarcely susceptible raising of the eyebrow more terrible to a sensitive young man than it would be to have to lead his regiment straight across a plain which is swept by the enemy's cannon? "You do not mean to say that at this time of day you believe that?" That is the language of the gesture, so tentative, yet so implacable; and too often it does its work with a fatal effect. Why should it be so? After all, what does the sneer represent? Not a superior knowledge, for Christianity has a good account to give of itself as a faith in the supernatural; not high moral principles, for this most assuredly is more generally on the side of simple faith; not that complex superiority, which cannot be resolved into anything that is merely moral or merely intellectual, but which confers distinction, an indefinable but indisputable distinction, on its possessor? No; they who enjoy this high distinction know too much of the pathos, of the difficulty of the realms of thought to sneer even when they detect most surely the presence of error. What, then, does the sneer represent? It represents a sort of extract or essence of a certain form of class opinion

—the opinion of the particular class which has weight with the man to whom the sneer is addressed, his own class, or a class just above or just below him. A certain section or sub-section of opinion, not necessarily best informed, thinks, or wishes others to think that it thinks, that Christ our Lord has had His day, and the sneer is an endeavour to enforce this presumption without incurring the responsibilities of patient discussion. Look at St. Peter in the palace of the high priest: even then, before Pentecost, Peter, in his fervid love of his Master, would not have shrunk from death had he been suddenly forced to choose between death and apostasy; but in that antechamber of the high priest his behaviour cools down—the situation is threatening, his Lord is already a prisoner and on his trial, and Peter meets a maid-servant, and it is impossible not to be astonished at the impertinence with which this maid ventures to challenge him. What is it that makes her so formidable? She represents a body of class opinion—the opinion of the class among which Peter moved; and such is our human nature in its weakness that he who was to become, through grace, Christ's first apostle succumbs in an agony of cowardice and shame: "I know not the Man."

We have heard and seen a great deal during the last few years of what is called the Salvation Army, and there is no doubt of its having achieved results which are, to say the least, very remarkable. Its creed certainly would appear to me to be only a fragment of that body of truth which was taught to mankind by the apostles of Christ. But then this truncated edition of the apostolic creed is not peculiar to the Salvation Army. Many of its methods, also, however excellent their motive, are in practice inconsistent, as it must seem, with the laws of that awful reverence with which all that touches the name and honour of the Infinite and Supreme Being should surely be handled. But there can be no doubt that this movement has roused a sense of religion among classes of our countrymen who are too generally beyond the influence of the Church; and it is better for us to ask ourselves the secret of this success than to criticise too hardly the machinery which has secured it. Brethren, what is that secret? Is it not that the Salvation Army, when it has brought a man to know ever so little of Christ our Lord, lays on the man this precept: "Do not be ashamed of Him; do something, say something, which proves to yourself and to others that you are not ashamed of Him. Wear a livery, walk about the streets, sing hymns as you walk, be organised into bands, and into com-

panies,—with this one object, to proclaim to the world that you are not ashamed of the Lord that bought you." Say what we may—and there is much to be said—say what we may about the methods of the Army, this inspiring motive is a noble one: it lies deep in the very heart of the eternal Gospel. No truth is truly held until we dare, when occasion requires to own it, to exult in owning it; and the poor men and women who join the Salvation Army often, to their honour, and as we may hope to their endless gain, endure much for the sake of whatever truth they thus publicly own. That is the real secret of their strength according to their light: they are not ashamed, after their own fashion, to confess Christ before men. Is it meant, you ask, that we are to parade our religious convictions on all occasions, in all societies, without regard to the proprieties which are dictated alike by usage and by forethought? Is there no risk of irritating and exasperating by such an indiscriminating propagandism? Are there, to speak plainly—are there no swine before whom our Divine Master would not have us thus cast His precious pearls quite unthinkingly? Certainly, Brethren, when precept or principle is never to be insisted on, never to be acted on in forgetfulness of others which guide or limit, or in any way interpret its application. Every duty has its appropriate opportunity: and the opportunity for owning before others our allegiance to Jesus Christ our Lord is when we are challenged to do so, or when not to do so is to give others a false impression of our convictions, or to forfeit an opportunity of helping others by our example or our sympathy. The exercise of the duty is to be determined by Christian prudence; but it is not to be determined by selfish interest, or by the way of man. If we have not been playing tricks with conscience, conscience may be depended on to tell us when and how we ought to own our Christian faith; and if we do own it firmly, modestly, tenderly, God will bless the effort to his glory, to the good of other souls, and of our own.

Something more than fifty years ago there was a small dinner party at the other end of London. The ladies had withdrawn, and under the guidance of one member of the company the conversation took a turn of which it will be enough here and now to say that it was utterly dishonourable to Jesus Christ our Lord. One of the guests said nothing, but presently asked the host's permission to ring the bell, and when the servant appeared he ordered his carriage. He then, with the courtesy of perfect self command, expressed his regret at being obliged to retire, but explained that he was

still a Christian. Mark the phrase—for it made a deep impression at the time—still a Christian. Perhaps it occurs to you that the guest who was capable of this act of simple courage must have been a bishop, or at least a clergyman. The party was made up entirely of laymen, and the guest in question became the great Prime Minister of the early years of the reign of Queen Victoria—he was the later Sir Robert Peel. There is much which makes a perfectly sincere man unwilling to say anything except under great provocation about his religious belief. He may fear that he may discolour, or exaggerate, or distrust what he means to say. He distrusts his own moral fitness to say anything at all: he reflects that those to whom he is speaking, although not Christians, may be, according to their light and their opportunities, better men than himself: he doubts whether he will not do more harm than good through unskilfulness, through impetuosity, through inaccuracy, through some faults of expression, or of taste. As he thinks the matter over he becomes less and less courageous, more and more fastidious, less and less willing to speak. Meanwhile, every variety of blasphemy and folly has its apostles, every negation, however audacious and desolating, has its defenders on the platform and the press; every superstition, however grotesque or discredited, has its fanatical partisans and devotees. Error, moral and intellectual error, stalks everywhere around us, now loudly advertising, now gently insinuating itself—violent, moderate, argumentative, declamatory, all by turns. And is the religion which our Lord has brought from heaven alone to be without advocates or defenders? Are Christians to be the only people who so weigh and mince their words, who are so very fearful of saying too much, and of being too enthusiastic, that they say little or say nothing in their Master's cause? You reply that it is the distinguishing prerogative of truth that it needs no human supports, and that it can take care of itself. Reflect that God, who might have ordered it otherwise, has made the propagation and defence of truth to depend upon human effort. No Christian who has the faith in his heart can keep it to himself with entire impunity. A faith which is not communicated will soon shrivel up within the soul that enshrines it. Even if a man holds but feebly to a scanty and mutilated creed, his wisdom is to do what he can to impress the little that he believes, so far as his faith is positive, upon other men. Like the flower in the springtime, his faith will thrive better in the open air than in the hothouse of a cramped, narrow soul. You kill a conviction by saying nothing about it when occasion requires.

you strengthen it by proclaiming it firmly, modestly, honestly, fearlessly. Here, as in much else, the ancients' saying becomes true: "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." And if you still hesitate, under the influence of motives which you are less willing to own, to do what you may, each within his sphere, for the person and truth of our adorable Lord, think of that day of which He speaks in the words before us; think of the scene transcending all words, transcending all power of imagination, "When He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." Think of the boundless exultation, think of the unutterable woe, think of the hopeless, inextricable confusion settling down at His word and before His face into order, into the order of eternal day, the order of eternal night. How will it fare with us, with you and with me, if His faith, beautiful in its ideal humanity, beautiful in its superhuman glory, is turned away from us as from those whom He is ashamed to own because in the day of time we were ashamed of Him? "Lord, Thou knowest my sinfulness, my thoughts are not hid from Thee. Oh, give me the comfort of Thine help again, and stablish me with Thy princely spirit. Then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee; I will speak of Thy testimonies; even before kings I will not be ashamed."

PILATE'S WIFE.

BY THE REV. G. T. COSTER.

MATTHEW XXVII. 19.

"When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that Just Man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him."

THAT is all that we know about Pilate's wife. She meets us in this one Scripture verse, and there she leaves us. But little is told us; and yet how much implied in the little! And the little quickens our desire for more.

There was the Blessed One, on His trial before Pilate—the bitter scribes and priests, with their loud and false accusations, seeking, determined, to compel the Governor to condemn Jesus. That Governor by his former cruelty and violence has put himself much in their power. If reported again to Rome he may look for removal from his high office. He fears them. They know that he fears them. They know his character—the weakness of the man behind the appearance of resolution and strength. Little as he thought it Pilate in that hour was on his trial as well as Jesus. And in sight of all the ages Pilate stands a condemned man in having condemned the Innocent whom he knew to be innocent.

"He knew that for envy" they clamoured for Jesus' death. That knowledge warned him; his own little-heeded conscience warned him; his wife warned him—in the very midst of the trial—against condemning "that Just Man."

Just for a moment she comes into the story of our Lord's life—and then is lost to us. But her word remains; the record of her interest in the Saviour remains.

Oh, how a word spoken for Christ lives!—always with its record on high;—and often even here—when every other word spoken here is forgotten, that remembered. All her many other words forgotten, the

brave word in which she spoke up and out for Christ is written in this page as on the rock for ever. To be read, to be told, through all time, "as a memorial of her." Not written by the Evangelist for nothing?

Pilate's wife! That is all the description by which she lives to us. Her name? Tradition says—Claudia Procula. Tradition says that she was a Jewish proselyte. And the Greek Church has canonised her and numbers her among its saints. But all that we certainly know of her is in this verse. Learn from it

I. *The testimony of woman to Christ.*—Then, when no one stood by Him—when no one spoke for Him—a woman spoke for Him. Men opposed Him. Early began the opposition; in Judea, down in Galilee; in the village, and town, and city—everywhere some looked on Him with evil eye; watched Him that they might accuse Him; questioned Him that they might catch Him in His words; unable to deny His miracles, put them down to the devil's power; plotted against Him; sought to kill Him; bore against Him the spirit of murder, and at last, though under the forms of law, did murder Him. Men thus acted.

But what woman thus acted? What woman watched Him with cruel eye; denied Him; deserted Him; betrayed Him; sought His death?

> Not she with trait'rous kiss her Saviour stung,
> Not she denied Him with unholy tongue!
> She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave,
> Last at His cross, and earliest at His grave.

Beautiful the friendliness of women to Christ; dear to us the written names of those who cared for Him—ministering to Him of their substance, showing Him hospitality, giving to Him of their best. Beautiful—but not to be wondered at.

His relationship with us was through His mother—only through His mother. Hence in His human heart a womanly tenderness with all His calm and Divine majesty.

Woman, with her quick insight into character, saw in Him a Friend, and Saviour, and Lord; trusted Him, followed Him, clung to Him when all things seemed against Him.

Well may woman cling to Him. How much she owes Him! How He has uplifted her, crowned her, made the drudge and slave and plaything into man's companion! His gentleness has made her great.

For woman's testimony to Christ listen to those redeemed by Him from

all the degradations of heathenism; from the emptiness and frivolity of a vain and foolish life; from the cares that weigh heaviest on woman's heart; from the unutterable longings that never can be satisfied with all the world can give.

Woman may well be the friend of Jesus. And pleasant is it to remember that even in the dark hour—so darkened by the shadow of the Cross—when He was on His trial, a woman's voice pleaded for Him. When no man's voice was heard then spake woman's into the judge's ear the word of tender, solemn pleading. Little, perhaps, Pilate's wife's personal knowledge of Him: but it was enough for her to testify to Him as "that Just Man." Not only worthy to live, but also of highest, of all honour!

II. *The testimony of dreams to Christ.*—She had had a dream about Him. This was her message to Pilate on the Judgment-seat: "Have thou nothing to do with that Just Man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." "This day," she says—not this night. Her dream had been dreamt "in the morning hours," when, according to the belief of those times, "dreams are true."

And what of her dream? Shall we regard it simply as a reflection of her day-thoughts respecting Jesus? Her husband had been appointed Procurator of Judæa four years before this time (A.D. 29), so that the period of her residence at Cæsarea and Jerusalem would cover the whole of our Saviour's ministry. She had, doubtless, in different ways, come to hear much about Him. And from all she heard of His gracious words and wonderful works He was to her no rebel against Rome, no perverter of the nation, no blasphemer, as His enemies declared, but a Just Man.

And, now, was this early morning dream just a reflection of her waking conviction as to Jesus? Nothing more? Surely more! For she says: "I have suffered many things in a dream because of Him." What was the dream? We know not; imagine what you will you know not. But hear what has been imagined by a modern poet, author of the hymn "Crown Him with many crowns"—

> "Oh, touch not thou that Holy Head,"
> The wife of Pilate cried;
> "Full is my heart with fear and dread,
> As though a Friend had died,
> Or was about to die, instead
> Of some one else beside;
> Spare thou that Just One; let Him go,
> The whispering spirits tell me so.

"Mysterious dream: I saw a fire
All boundless in its blaze,
Raging in red omnivorous ire,
And scorching in its rays;
It licked the heavens with many a spire,
Nor could I bear to gaze:
The clouds together seemed to roll
And wither like a parchment scroll.

"Hosts upon hosts essayed in vain
The ruthless flames to quell:
Each mountain, city, tower, and plain
Subsided in the hell;
Ten thousand sounds of woe and pain
Blended into a yell,
Such as hath struck no mortal ear
But mine—in this last night of fear.

"The rocks were rent, the welkin rang;
When, lo! as from a throne,
While souls in secret sorrow sang,
A Lamb came forth alone.
Its look was love; it hushed the clang
Of Earth's tremendous groan;
Then, mounting on the awful pyre,
Pierced its own heart, and quenched the fire.

"And as it died, its closing eyes
With tears most piteous ran;
Its face beneath the frowning skies
Waxed wonderfully wan;
Then change; and in amazing guise
An aspect wore of Man,
A Man Divine, and more than fair,
Too like the Mystic Prisoner there."

That is a poet's striking imagination of the dream. But whatever the dream, Pilate's wife suffered in dreaming it—either we are warranted in supposing because she dreamt of the cruel usage to which the innocent Jesus of Nazareth was subjected, or because of the judgments that fell upon those by whom He was cruelly used.

Her dream testified to the innocence of our Lord. A Divine dream we may call it. Then God used the dream, as He had often done before, as, doubtless, he has often done since.

And are all dreams to be heeded? No; we must distinguish. There are "wicked dreams," that "disturb the curtained sleep,"—foul, vile, that could come only from the Evil One. There are "dreams of the stomach—foolish fantasies that arise from indigestion;" and also dreams that are Divine. In the words of Elihu (Job xxxiii. 14-16), "For God speaketh . . . in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth

upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." The Bible speaks of many such, and not only touching spiritual matters, such as Jacob's at Bethel, and Paul's dream of a man of Macedonia entreating help; for few of the dreams in this Book refer to spiritual things. Recall the dreams of Joseph, of Pharaoh's servants, of Pharaoh himself, of Nebuchadnezzar, and of others. These were temporal in their character, and affected the dreamers as individuals alone.

And shall we say that dreams then were needed and not now? that we have God's will fully in these pages revealed to us? that we have "a light unto which we do well to take heed"—a light bright and sufficient for us? And had not Paul such? Yet to him came as his guide, sometimes anyway, the ministry of dreams.

Wonderful, mysterious! And used sometimes, as history and the experience of many will attest, in modern days to warn, to guide men. And thus, too, crimes have been detected.

We believe, then, that God, who used the dream in olden times, uses it still. When is man so alone as in sleep? God loves to speak to man when alone. Then, in the night silence, the spirit unhindered, God can seal His instruction upon the unsleeping spirit.

Oh, how such dreams call man out of his little world? He has been narrowing his thoughts and hopes to his small business world, and, lo! there is a spirit world—a world where the soul is quick and takes no count of time, living through long stretches of time—imagined time and circumstances—in a few fleeting minutes! a world of wonders and glories as well as of terrors and sorrows; a spirit-world that teaches us that we are more than shop and home and money and toil, more than journeying feet and wearying hands—that we are spirit, and that we are on the way to the spirit land, where it shall dwell in unhindered life and service.

That is a lesson we may learn from dreams. And the character of the dream will show the source of it. The wicked dream, the foolish dream, we may gladly forget—they come not from above. But the dream pure and heavenly—beautiful with a light never upon sea or land, with soothing, warning, or guiding voices, can be but from One. They may seldom come; but when they come we know whence they come.

Pilate's wife's dream was about Christ. Doubtless she had heard much about Him, about His miracles of goodness; and had He not recently,

just beyond the hill at Bethany, raised a man from death to life? Had He not entered the city but a few days ago amid the jubilant cries of the multitude? May she not have heard much about Him from the friendly rulers, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea? Any way, whatever her waking knowledge—little or much—of Jesus her dream assures her that He is a Righteous Man, and for her husband to lend himself to clamour for His death will only be for that Governor to load his soul with "the deep damnation" of condemning innocence to death.

Her dream bore testimony to Christ—not the only dream that had been dreamt about Jesus. By a dream the wise men had been warned not to report their discovery of the infant "King of the Jews" to Herod. By a dream Joseph had been told to flee into Egypt to save the "young Child's life." By a dream, when cruel Herod was dead, Joseph was directed to return into Judæa with "the young Child and His mother." Dreams about Christ!

And have not all of us had them? If not by night yet by day?—in a word, our imagination touched by the purity, kindled by the glory of Christ? In some hours of life how He has shone to you, "glorious in His apparel!" You have had your vision of Him—the King! the Saviour! the Friend! the Brother! How beautiful! how gracious! how wise those guided by His wisdom! How happy those saved by His grace! How blest those living in His love!

Oh, that vision of the imagination! True: but only a beam of the glorious fullness of truth! That vision was from God to charm you, to win you to Jesus. Oh, be "not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

III. *The testimony of suffering to Christ.*—"Have thou nothing to do with that Just Man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." Not only in the dream. In her waking thoughts, too. Now! Else why seek thus to save Him? The suffering lived on into the day—that He, the Righteous Man, should be condemned unrighteously to die!

"This Just Man." She knew enough about Him to know that of Him. She has heard of Him if she has not seen Him. The thought of Him has taken hold of her. This Man should not be on His trial! A Just Man! None but the unjust would seek His death.

She would do her best to save him. Pilate—she knows that *he* has often been cruel to the weak. She would warn him against such cruelty now.

The wife failed. But was it not well in the wife to have tried? In distress of spirit she made the fruitless effort. It was well. Christ knew of it. We know of it—to our instruction. Her own heart was eased by the thought that she had done what she could.

The godly wife of the godless husband—let her bear her testimony for Christ with meekness of wisdom, with tenderness. For whom should she be in such earnest prayer, in such holy anxiety, as for the partner of her life? And how often the husband has been won to Christ by the conversation of the wife!

Deep her feeling, being in an agony to save him—the Just Man; eager was the message sent to her husband. He was on the judgment throne when the the messenger whispered the strange and solemn warning in his ear. An uncommon thing this for her to do. This was no common hour. And He for whom she pleaded was "not in the roll of common men."

Did she suffer much for Christ? We may hope, then, much for her. Suffer? And many things? Strange! Not strange! Other women in that hour were suffering many things for Christ—and she knows enough of Him to be in that fellowship of suffering.

Oh, what may we not hope for her! Did she thus plead for Christ upon His trial? Not indifferent, then, could she be to His death. She saw the darkness; she felt the earthquake; she must have heard of the resurrection. And all that nothing to her? We cannot think it. Rather would we believe that, though unchronicled here, she became "obedient to the faith"—one to whom the Blessed Lord said: "I have called thee by name; thou art Mine."

Is there one here who has not suffered many things because of Christ? You have not received Him as your Saviour and King but you have suffered for it—in that trouble of conscience, in that unrest of heart, in that dissatisfaction of spirit. Oh, there is suffering in resisting His grace, in trifling with His mercy, in delaying to accept His love!

And suffering, too, humbling, yet blessed suffering in our first acquaintance with Him—suffering that we should so have sinned against Him, so have grieved Him, so have delayed receiving Him—that we are so unlike Him.

Oh that suffering!—increased by the resistance of the worldly heart. It is through tribulation we begin the path to, as well as "enter, the kingdom."

Think of, accept, "Jesus Christ the Righteous" as your Advocate with the Father, your Hope, your Saviour. The Righteous! In Him was no sin. He could be your substitute. He can be your Advocate. Trust Him.

Put not this word from you. If—to use one of Dr. Payson's illustrations—you should see at this moment a very fine, an almost invisible thread coming down from heaven and attaching itself to you, and knew it came from God, what would you do? Would you dare to thrust it away? Now, this word of appeal is like a thread. It is weak and frail, and you can easily brush it away. But will you? No! Welcome it, and it will enlarge and strengthen itself, until it becomes a golden thread to bind you to that Just Man—the Saviour—and to bind you for ever. Amen.

ENDURANCE.

BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

Preached in Westminster Abbey, Sunday, November 23, 1884.

St. John vi. 8, 9.

"One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"

You heard, my friends, in this morning's Gospel, the story from which this verse is taken. The multitude flocked to Christ, because they heard from Him the words of life. He flung to the winds the scrupulosities and traditionalism of a Church which was dying of respectability, of conventionality, of conscious and unconscious hypocrisy: and the people had heard Him gladly because he spake with authority, "and not as the scribes." They were in a desert place, for He was under a ban. They had come to Him from afar, and listened long, not knowing when they should hear again the words of life. He pitied their hunger, their thirst, their weariness, and His disciples had nothing to suggest but that He should send them home, till, with the glimmering of faith, St. Andrew pointed out that the lad who attended them had "five barley loaves and two small fishes: but what are they," he added, half despairingly, "among so many?" The answer of Jesus was instantaneous: "Make the men sit down." Very humble as well as fearfully scanty was the sole apparent provision. Barley bread was so coarse that even the hearty Roman soldiers were only required to eat it by way of punishment, and fish was the commonest and cheapest kind of food: but so Jesus lived, and His disciples. He was poor among the poorest. Not for Him was the purple and the feast of Dives. He did not come to pamper the luxury or allure the appetencies of idle men. Barley loaves and only two small fishes! But it was enough for the Lord of all: and with that scant, poor food blessed and multiplied He fed the hungry, and refreshed the weary.

spread the table in the wilderness, and made them sit on the green grass in the sunset, and gave them that which to their hunger was sweet as manna, and sent them rejoicing on their way. We are in the wilderness; the day is far spent; all round us on every side are the hungry, the thirsty, the weary: we feel ourselves utterly helpless to help the helpless. we have not two hundred pennyworth of bread for them, and even if we had it would be insufficient that every one might take a little. Yes; but have we tried to use the poor and scant store which we have? Have we, like the poor lad, offered our barley and loaves to Christ to bless? If not, can we expect that they should be used, still less that they should be multiplied? The lesson I would draw from this scene is the one of Christ's own Gospel, on the one hand, to poor, humble, ill-endowed, ungifted persons, and at the same time the encouragement, the blessing, the multiplication which he gives to little things. These ought not, I think, to be fantastic or unmeaning lessons; for all of us who are gathered here to-day —the immense majority of us—are neither great, nor rich, nor noble—but just such humble, unknown persons as Christ was feeding. And very few among us have more than little gifts to offer—little, I mean, not in reference to God's infinitude—to whom it would be no gift at all if cedared Lebanon were our burning altar, and we could offer upon it "the cattle on a thousand hills"—but little, I mean, in comparison with what some of our brother men can and do give to Him.

I have striven on the last two Sundays to offer some consolation to the despondent and the disappointed, to the afflicted and the bereaved: to-day I would offer encouragement to the lowly, to the unimportant, to the insignificant, to the commonplace, to the great mass of ordinary, every-day men and women in struggling positions, of very moderate capacities, without any genius, quite unlearned, never heard of, perhaps, half-a-mile from home. Yes, I would speak to the masses, the undistinguished multitude, to which the bulk of every congregation must belong: to such as Christ fed with barley loaves in the desert place, to such as He addressed on the Mountain of Beatitudes: to such as those among whom He lived as His life long in the carpenter's shop of provincial Nazareth, in the fisher's boat upon the inland sea. My friends, for all these, for you and me, for the world in general, there is either no Gospel, or it is Christ's. If Christ's Gospel be not true, there is no Gospel at all to offer you: neither for us in the darkness and in the desert is there voice or any

that can answer; nor is there any honour to God from those whom men oppress, nor glory from God to those whom men despise. For the world, in spite of its pretentions, does despise as well as hate all that is not of it. The world of wealth, the world of power, the world of brute violence, the world of sceptical intellect, is inflated with its own self important arrogance. It is at once insolent and cringing; it flatters and it sneers; it shouts for the popular, it hisses the defeated; it crows the victor, it tramples on the fallen - pride is the very badge of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The haughty beauty in her jewels will scarce deign to glance at the plain, neglected girl; the proud aristocrat is ironically patronising or openly contumelious to those who are not of his own caste; the conceitedly clever man will revel in his power to humiliate and to wound the inferior capacity. Unless a man has God's grace in his heart, showing itself in the form of love, when he pushes himself but so much as an inch above his fellows he will look upon them superciliously from his noble hill altitude. Yes; and thousands of times the worse man, the meaner man, the falser man, will despise his superior in worth and goodness from the whole height of his interiority. "This multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed," says religious pride. "These persons are not in society," says fashionable pride. "Mankind is composed of one thousand million persons, mostly fools," says intellectual pride. "They are the vulgar—mere ciphers, mere nobodies; let them know their place," says the pride of rank and riches; and all these forms of pride are pitiless and selfish, and He who is the Lord of all declared Himself against them: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek." Ah, my brethren, be sure of this, scorn of anything except depraved and wilful wickedness is a devilish thing, though there is nothing which the world admires! See how Christ in every word and action of His life set His face against it! Was Galilee despised? Then Galilee should be His country. Was Nazareth a by-word? Then Nazareth should be His home. Did the pupils of the Rabbis look down on the untaught as though they were mere dust beneath their feet? Then Christ would not be a pupil in their schools. Had the rich grown insolent in fooling? Then the manger should be His cradle, and the Cross His bed of death. Did the wealthy wear soft clothing and live in kings' houses? Then He would be a wanderer, and not know where to lay His head. Were women in the

East a sad, downtrodden sisterhood, so that when they approached the Pharisee would draw in his floating robes? Then, to the astonishment even of His disciples, He would talk with the woman at the noon-day well. Were children neglected? Then, hallowing all infancy, He would take them in His arms, lay His hands upon them, and bless them. Were lepers shunned like a pestilence? Then, despite the whole Levitical law, He would touch the leper into health. Did men trample with pitiless execration upon the afflicted and the fallen? Then, unreproved the woman with the issue of blood should grasp the tassel of His robe; unreproved the harlot should wash His feet with her tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head; and, as you have just heard in the second lesson, He would pardon the adultress as she sobbed upon the Temple floor—a dishevelled heap of shame and misery—He would utter in the accents of His tender mercy, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." Thus did Christ brand pride, and the cruel indifference which is twin-sister to pride, with the stigma of His indelible abhorrence. Surely, my friends, if we miss the lesson which by His words and life Christ thus would teach us, we must be blind indeed. It is not only the lesson of love, it is not even the lesson only that He loved as none had ever loved, but it is that He loved those also whom none had ever loved before. He made his grave with the wicked: He parleyed even on the cross the dying malefactor: He took His example of virtue even from the heretical Samaritan; He came to the sick, not to the whole; to the sinners, not to those who thought themselves righteous; to publicans, not to the Pharisees—to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Amongst the diseased, amongst the unlovely, amongst the despised, amongst the powerless, amongst those whom all classes united to despise and hate He took His place. He stopped beside, He pitied, He saved, He tended the robbed and wounded wayfarer whom the priest passed with indifferent step, and on whom the Levite gazed with unpitying stare. What can we say more than this, that He was "the friend of publicans and sinners"? Everywhere and always He saw what the world never sees—the soul of goodness in things evil. The way of the world is the very opposite. Like the flesh flies which settle on a sore, or the foul creatures which ever buzz where they can find or make corruption, the world's children always fix upon any spot of weakness in the strong, of unworthiness in the noble. They

know nothing of the sun except its spots, and if they cannot find spots even with the strongest telescope of their malice, they will lyingly invent them, because when they are black they hate that anything should shine. Does a good man commit one fault? They do their best to make him known by nothing but that fault. Does a great poet write one bad line? They will make that one bad line better known than all his golden words. Now, see the difference between the world and Christ. I must tell the story again, though I have told it before. By the wayside, in the dust, under the blinding sun, lay a dead dog, a thing which in the East is a proverb for the extremest vileness. Round it, in aimless delight in degradation and decay, gathered a group of the lazy, worthless idlers of an Eastern village, staring at it with looks of loathing, pointing to it with disgustful scorn, uttering about it every word of execration with idle laughter. Then, suddenly, there is a silence among them, for they saw Jesus approaching, and some of them stepped a little aside, and gazed, and wondered. The Master came up to those heartless loiterers, and looked for a moment at the carcase of the poor, dead creature whom God had made, as it lay in the dust under the blistering sunlight, and He was silent; and then, amid the silence, He said, "Its teeth are as white as pearl", and so He passed on. Where all were jeering and execrating He would utter the one word of pity: where all had no eyes except for what was disgusting, He would see nothing but the one redeeming touch. Oh, world, such was thy Saviour and such art thou!

I know not, my brethren, whether you care for this truth—the acceptance by Christ of those who morally, or intellectually, or spiritually, no less than physically, are the blind, the maimed, the halt, the lepers of poor humanity. I only know that I care for it intensely—it is to me of the utmost comfort. In all limitations of power, in all sense of weakness, in all tauntings about deficiency, in all consciousness of unnumbered imperfections, whenever we have to meet in life the proud man's scorn or the base man's sneer, let us think of Him, let us turn to Him, who took His place among the humble, among the insignificant, among the poor—to Him who loved mankind in spite of all its sin and all its shame, who honoured man not for the honours which are about him, not for the gifts of Providence, the accidents of favour, or the little brief authority of place, but for this or only and simply—because he was man, and because he was miserable and needed help. Such love of Christ for small, ungifted, humble, thoughtful

persons is a transcendent comfort. No less comforting is the acceptance by Christ of little things, the pity of Christ for evil things, the tenderness of Christ for things despised. He instantly made use of the poor lad's five barley loaves and two small fishes. His symbols for the kingdom of heaven were the handful of leaven which the woman took and hid in three measures of meal, and the grain of mustard-seed, which is the smallest of all seeds. He is sitting in the Temple; the rich are ostentatiously casting into the treasure their splendid gifts; the poor widow comes, and, in frightened shame, drops in her smallest of all coins, her least of permissible offerings—the two mites, which make one farthing; and Christ joyously declares that because she was poor, because she was self-denying in her gift, she had given more than them all. The thrones are set; the great assize is opened; the dead, small and great, stand before the Throne; and, lo! they are judged—not about ritual observances, or theological orthodoxy, but about little deeds of kindness, by Him who said that if one would but give in His name a cup of cold water to one of His disciples, he should not lose his reward. At a flower festival, not long ago, one little, shrinking child laid on the altar step her tiny offering—it was but a single daisy. The little one had nothing else to give, and with even such a offering, given in a single and with a simple heart, Christ, I think, would have been well pleased.

Are not the resultant lessons plain? By far the most of us have not ten talents to offer to Christ's service, or even five talents: we have, at best, but one talent, and perhaps not even that. Well, the world attaches importance to our deficiency, but God thinks nothing of it. When the Master comes, He will not ask how great or how small were our endowments and our capabilities, but only how we have used them. If we have not neglected our one poor talent, or even fraction or minim of a talent, we, no less than the most richly gifted, shall be thrilled with the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" which will atone for ever for all shortcomings. He who buried one talent may sometimes make ten of it, and he that has ten sometimes makes them worse than one, using them not for God's service and for man's good, but to God's dishonour and to man's destruction. We are surrounded here on all sides by the memorials of kings and poets and heroes, successful and mighty and famous men, and perhaps we are discouraged, thinking, with a sigh, we can never be as these. No, not so, my brethren, they should rather encourage us as they

encouraged the poor bookseller's boy who, one day just a hundred years ago, sat down by that northern door, weary with his load of books, and burst into bitter tears at his prospect of a dreary and drudging life: but as he lifted up his eyes and saw those statues round him of men who had fought bravely the battle of life, he took heart of courage and went his way, and after many struggles became in India a benefactor of mankind. But they should encourage us in quite another and a surer way than this even while we recognize that we can never be as the least of these: for the least of us may be as much greater than many of these, as goodness is a greater and better and more eternal thing than any earthly greatness. We cannot be like yonder great orator, Chatham, who swayed the hearts of his countrymen like the heart of one man. We can never be as yonder great musician, Handel, who lifted up, and whose strains still lift up, the souls of men heavenward on the golden wings of music. We can never be as yonder immortal ones who, in a world so little and so mean, have given us nobler loves and nobler hopes—the poets who on earth have made us heirs of truth and pure delights by heavenly lays. Well, be it so. But, on the other hand, we can be as good as any poet, or musician, or cunning artificer, or eloquent orator that ever was in that which is best and greatest and most true in God's sight, in that which is, indeed, alone of any eternal significance; and many of these great men whose statues rise around us would lay aside their wreath of fame for the simple goodness which is possible to the very least among us all. Here on earth

> How many take themselves for mighty kings,
> Who there beyond, shall wallow in the mire,
> Leaving behind them horrible dis-praise.

Yes: the last may be first, and the first last. Was it not so with those whom Christ chose and loved? Peter—what was he but a poor Galilean fisherman? Andrew—what was he but Simon Peter's brother? Matthew, a scorned and hated publican, every one of them dull and ordinary men as the world thought, unlearned and ignorant, only noticed at all because they had been with Jesus. So was it with nearly all these early Christians who renewed and evangelised the world. Not many rich, not many noble, not many mighty were called. They were for the most part slaves and artisans—"a feeble folk." Look even at their writings. To-day is Saint Clement's day, and the epistle of Saint Clement still survives, and is

one of the earliest relics of Christian literature. It is quite ordinary, quite second hand; it has no gleam of power, of genius, of originality: it is quite valueless as a literary composition; and so it is with nearly all the writings of the early Fathers. The Christian apologists had none of the keen flashing intellect or powerful ability of men like Lucian and Celsus, who wrote against them, nor the haughty spirit and suppressed fire of Romans like Tacitus and Juvinal, who scornfully thought that their doctrines could be held by no sane man. How, then, did these early Christians get the start of the majestic world, these lowest of the low, these hedgers and ditchers, these wretches who worshipped in the catacombs and died in the amphitheatre? The answer is easy—it was by innocence, it was by virtue, it was by goodness. The intellect of the world disowned them, the scorn of the world spat upon them, the malignity of the world "searched them with candles," the power of the world would have trampled them into the dust; yet by the irresistible weakness of holy lives, these, though they had nothing but their barley loaves, built up a better, a stronger, a purer society; while Rome, to which the mightier kingdoms of Assyria and Persia had succumbed like a forlorn and desperate castaway, did shameful execution on herself.

Why, then, in conclusion, should any one of us sorrow for, or be ashamed of, his earthly insignificance? Ours as much as any man's may be the most inconceivable of blessings—the peace of God here, "which passeth all understanding," and hereafter a blessedness which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Be we high or low, rich or poor, clever or stupid—for which God cares nothing—it is equally possible for the humblest of us to do our duty. It is true that we have but our five coarse barley loaves and two small fishes; in themselves they are useless. Well, then, let us give them to Christ. He can multiply them and can make them more than enough to feed the five thousand. A cup of cold water! What a little thing it is! Well, but will the world ever forget one cup of cold water which David would not drink but poured upon the earth, because his men had risked their lives to fetch it him, or the other cup of cold water which Sir Philip Sidney, although dying and athirst, gave to the wounded soldier who eyed it eagerly at the battle of Zutphen?

A grain of mustard seed! Can anything be smaller? Well, but when Count Zinzendorf was a boy at school he founded amongst his schoolfellows a little guild which he called the "Order of the Grain of Mustard

Seed," and thereafter that seedling grew into the great tree of the Moravian Brotherhood whose boughs were a blessing to the world. The widow's mite! When they laughed at Saint Theresa when she wanted to build a great orphanage and had but three shillings to begin with, she answered, "With three shillings Theresa can do nothing; but with God and her three shillings there is nothing which Theresa cannot do." Do not let us imagine, then, that we are too poor, or too stupid, or too ignorant, or too obscure to do any real good in the world wherein God has placed us. Is there a greater work in this day than the work of education? Would you have thought that the chief impulse to that work, whereon we now annually spend so many millions of taxation, was given by a poor, illiterate Plymouth cobbler—John Pounds? Has there been a nobler work of mercy in modern days than the purification of prisons? Yet that was done by one whom a great modern writer sneeringly patronised as "the dull, good man, John Howard." Is there a grander, nobler enterprise than missions? The mission of England to India was started by a humble, itinerant shoemaker, William Carey. These men brought to Christ their humble efforts, their barley loaves, and in His hand, and under His blessing, they multiplied exceedingly. "We can never hope," you say, "to lead to such vast results." So they thought. "We cannot tell whether this or that will prosper." But do you imagine that they ever dreamed that their little efforts would do so much? And, besides, they knew that the results are nothing, the work, everything—nothing the gift, everything the willing heart. But have you ever tried? If you bring no gift, how can God use it? The lad must bring his barley loaves to Christ before the five thousand can be fed. Have you ever attempted to do as he did? Have you even in the smallest measure, or with the least earnest desire, tried to follow John Wesley's golden advice: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, to all the persons you can, in all the places you can, as long as ever you can"? Or, if you have not attended to that rule, ask your own consciences, not conventionally, but honestly and searchingly, not as before your own self-deceiving souls, but as before God who "searcheth the heart and the reins"—ask whether you have done or are doing, apart from mere self or domestic routine, any good at all, at any time, at all to any human being whatsoever. Take but one instance—kind words. A kind word of praise, of sympathy, of encouragement, of affection—it would not cost you much; but how often

does our pride, or our envy, or our indifference prevent us from speaking it? The cup of cold water, the barley loaves, the two farthings, the single daisy,—how often are we too mean or too self-absorbed to give even these! And are not we to give them because we cannot endow hospitals, or build cathedrals, or write epic poems? Ah, if you would be in the least sincere, in the least earnest! Let us be encouraged. The little gifts of our poverty, the small services of our insignificance, the barley loaves of the Galilean boy on the desert plain, the one talent of poor, dull persons, like ourselves, are despised by the world, but they are dear to, they are accepted of, and may be infinitely rewarded by Him, who, though "the conies are but a feeble folk," yet gives them their homes in the rock, without whom not a sparrow falls, who numbers the very hairs of our head, who builds His vast continents by the toil of the coral insects, and by His grains of sand stays the raging of the sea.

EPISODE OF ZACCHÆUS.

BY THE REV. DR. TATE.

St. Luke xix. 1—10.

"And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchæus,"

One who followed the Master's footsteps during His entire ministry has left us its character in the few but expressive words: "He went about doing good." The weary journeys were many: the sacred object was one. St. John has recorded one of these journeys, which brings this out in a very striking manner. It was from Judæa into Galilee. The route lay through Samaria: but because of the hatred with which the Samaritan regarded the Jew that route was avoided—it was dangerous even to life. This consideration, however, did not weigh with the Lord Jesus. "He must needs," says St. John, "pass through Samaria." A wicked woman was there. She had "had five husbands," and, having left them all, was now living with one who was not her husband. And the Lord's sacred errand was to turn that woman from the ways of sin to those of righteousness and truth. The work before Him, entirely possessed His spirit. He was "wearied with His journey," and fain to rest on Jacob's Well. He was also thirsty: Nature demanded the refreshment which that well supplied. And He was hungry besides. The disciples, knowing His need, had gone to buy meat in the city. But He forgot both weariness and hunger—the evil woman occupied all His thoughts. (St. John iv. 3-34). We may well suppose that the same thoughts filled His mind as He now "entered and passed through Jericho." A wicked man was there. He had come to turn him from wickedness, and to teach him the fear of God. We might almost adopt St. John's language and say: "He must needs" pass through Jericho.

But how does it appear that Zacchæus was a wicked man? "He was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich." It is needless to say who

the publicans mentioned in the Gospels were. They were tax-gatherers. Is it a wicked thing, then, to be a tax-gatherer? It depends on two things—whose taxes he is gathering, and how he gathers them. A pamphlet was written some years ago, called "The Battle of Dorking." Its object was to show that before we were aware, Germany would conquer England. God forbid that so great a calamity should befall us as a people! But supposing it was permitted to do so, in what condition should we find ourselves? We should have German military governors in all the chief cities of our land. We should have German judges, and German magistrates, and should be ground down, most probably, by heavy taxation. And what, in such circumstances, would we think of English publicans—men not ashamed to collect the taxes of the stranger? We should deny to them, I believe, the very name of Englishmen. And if, besides collecting these hated taxes, they demanded more than they had a right to ask, and on our refusal to pay dragged us before German magistrates, and on charges of disloyalty, got us mulcted by heavy fines—what should we say then? No language would be strong enough to express our abhorrence of these instruments of foreign tyranny, or English soil their persons would scarcely be safe.

The case with the Jewish publican was worse even than this. Whatever [illegible] Germany [illegible] Christian nation ruled and ruling by Christian law. But the cruel heathen Roman, who now trod down the miserable Jew, knew no law but force, and considered the subject nations as his prey. And yet sons of Abraham were found base enough to collect the taxes which he wrung from their oppressed brethren. Baser still, they demanded more than was appointed them. Basest of all, they dragged the unhappy [illegible] before the Heathen magistrate, and, accusing him falsely of disloyalty, mulcted them solely by his ruin. The cry of the widow and orphan ascended to heaven against them; and their poor, plundered brethren classed them with the vilest of the vile. When "two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican: the Pharisee stood by himself and prayed"—he would not suffer the publican to approach him. Nor can we call this a severe judgment. "Do not even the publicans so?" was the question of Jesus Himself. "Publicans and sinners," "publicans and harlots," were words familiarly in His mouth.

To this class Zacchæus belonged; he was a publican. Nay, more—"he

was the chief among the publicans" of Jericho. Their accounts passed through his hands, and he directed all their proceedings. And he had prospered in his unhallowed trade—"he was rich." His house and gardens were, doubtless, among the finest in Jericho his horses and equipage among the costliest. And his fellow citizens, as they looked with envy on the one, and met the other on the highway, cursed the owner in their hearts. "A man that is a sinner," as the text goes on to say, was their estimate of him and of his ways.

How, then, came such a miscreant in contact with the Lord Jesus? In the simplest possible manner. "He sought to see Jesus, who He was." —*i. e.*, what He was like. Nothing could be more natural. We all like to scan the features of those who have made themselves a name in the world. When the great Napoleon, then master of all Europe, was on his fatal journey into Russia, men, women, and children stood in crowds along his route. They stood, says the historian, for days and nights together, without food or rest. They sought to see the man who had subdued the civilised world. The same feeling showed itself afterwards in men's eagerness to see his conqueror. A quiet country clergymen, in the extreme North of Scotland, came on foot all the way from Wick to London to look at the Duke of Wellington. And, having gazed on the hero, he returned on foot as he had come, saying: "I am well rewarded."

Such, and with reason, was the feeling of Zacchæus now. The lowly Jesus of Nazareth was at this eventful moment the central figure of the Eastern world. "His fame" had gone "through all Syria." Men looked to Him as David's Son and the heir to David's throne. They expected moreover, as the context tells us, that that throne should immediately be set up, and "the kingdom of God immediately appear." "He was nigh unto Jerusalem."—only fifteen miles off. All opposition would, of course, yield before Him as He advanced, and His righteous cause would triumph. Nor was even this all. The heathen historians of that day tell us that an impression then prevailed among all the nations of the East that he who should re-build the throne of David should make himself the monarch of the world. And when this most distinguished of all the men of His time was now passing through Jericho, well might Zacchæus desire to see what He was like. There was nothing gracious in the feeling itself; but the blessed God made use of it to lead the publican to salvation.

Another circumstance, apparently trivial, contributed to the same result. Zacchæus was not able to see Jesus. He "could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was to pass that way." There was probably another reason than his littleness of stature for this step. He knew himself to be deservedly obnoxious to his fellow-citizens, and desired to see without being seen in turn. And this was used of God to bring him under the very eye of the Saviour, though Zacchæus knew it not.

Let us contemplate him, meanwhile, in his tree. He is safe among its leaves, in advance of the cavalcade, in an attitude of intense expectation. He hears the hum of many voices, the tread of many feet. Nearer and nearer it comes. He can distinguish the central figure, the leading disciples on either hand, the rest behind, the multitude in the rear of all. But his heart begins to beat—the cavalcade halts beneath the tree! It beats still faster. For, "when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, Zacchæus."

Let us mark the contrast. Zacchæus "sought to see Jesus." He did not anticipate that Jesus should look up, and see him—ay, and call him by his name, and that before all the people! "He knows me;" said the conscience-striken man, "knows my past and present life of sin. He is about to denounce me to the multitude, and I shall be stoned in my tree. Would to God I had been content and remained within the shelter of my dwelling!"

Who can tell the agony of that moment? But it was only a moment. "Make haste, and come down," said the Lord; "for to-day I must abide at thy house." These words must have astonished Zacchæus. They relieved him also, and melted his heart within him with gratitude and love. "He made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully."

Our Lord, encumbered with the multitude, would necessarily be some time in reaching the house of the publican. And when He reached it He doubtless found all ready, and those invited to sit down to table with Him who were likely to profit by His words.

Let us so leave them for a moment, and look to those left outside. "And when they saw it they all murmured, saying that He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." Zacchæus was, indeed, a man that was a sinner. Had the blessed Lord, then, gone to eat bread with him to encourage him in his sin? If so, their murmuring had been just and right-

cous. But they ought to have known that He never sought the sinner save to bring him out of sin. Their murmuring, therefore, was most evil. It was the murmuring of self-righteous and ungrateful and wicked hearts.

Turn we, therefore, from it to contemplate the scene inside. "And Zacchæus stood and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I [henceforth] give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I [henceforth] restore him fourfold." These words are an answer to something spoken. Our Lord, therefore, had been speaking. He might have pleaded weariness and hunger and thirst and the need of refreshment at the meal as a reason for being silent. But at Jericho, as at Samaria, all was forgotten in His sacred errand. What, then, had He been saying? We have some clue to it in the words that follow. He calls Zacchæus "a son of Abraham." Jesus had come to seek "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and Zacchæus was one of them. And there others of them, doubtless, at the table, publicans like Zacchæus himself. We scarcely need to ask, what His discourse would be. It is as if we heard it. He had been speaking, doubtless, of Abraham's God, and of His unequalled love to His people: of their obligation to love Him, and to love each other for His sake. And while showing them the brotherhood of Israel, He had been telling them how base it was for one child of Israel to defraud and oppress another, and to take the part of the heathen against the heritage of God. And He had been speaking of God's readiness to pardon, and of Himself as the channel of God's mercy —"the Son of Man, who had power to forgive sins." And in speaking such words He had been urging those around Him to repentance and amendment of life. They, meanwhile, hung entranced on His words: "Never man," they said, "spake like this Man."

He "ceased, and on their ears so charming left His voice" that Zacchæus stood up to reply. He had been reclining at the meal, but no man can sit or recline when under deep emotion. "What I have been," he would say, "Lord, Thou knowest. But I have heard Thee now, and the whole course of my life is changed." The half of my goods I [will henceforth] give to the poor." And as for those whom I have injured by false accusation, I [will] restore them fourfold." Here was a pledge openly given, to be as openly redeemed.

"Ah, yes," some will answer, "such pledges are often given. But they are forgotten as soon as given. And when the momentary emotion i

past, men return to their old ways." This, alas! is too true in many cases. But that it was not so in this case, the Lord Himself is our witness. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house. The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Salvation is deliverance from the power of sin. The Saviour's name was "called Jesus" because He has power to give us deliverance. And He had done so, on this occasion, for poor, lost Zacchæus. He had found him wicked, wandering in the ways of evil: He had brought him home to righteousness and to God. And now appeared the reason why he went "to be a guest with a man that is a sinner"—that He might turn that sinner into a saint.

We have therefore Christ's own authority for saying that the pledge which Zacchæus gave, he also faithfully and truly kept. Great must have been the astonishment of the people of Jericho as they watched him day by day, and saw him keeping it. "What has come," one would ask, "to the merciless publican? I found him, a few days since, in one of the lowest parts of Jericho. He was seeking out the poor and supplying their wants liberally. There seemed no end to his beneficence." "What has come," another would say, "to the false accuser? I found him in the house of those whom he had cruelly wronged. He was making glad the heart of the poor widow by restoring her fourfold." We can answer the questions of both. The love of God had come to Zacchæus. And he had learnt its sacred lesson that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

But no man can continue such giving as that of Zacchæus now was, without being impoverished thereby. Half his goods given to the poor, and fourfold restored to all whom he had wronged, must soon have made Zacchæus a beggar. Those gardens which were the admiration of Jericho, that equipage which was the envy of his fellow-citizens, would pass then into other hands. As for Zacchæus himself, he would practise some honest calling, and would grow, as he did so, in favour with God and man. He who had saved him from evil and taught him righteousness had thus, indeed, proved Himself, "the power of God."

And He is much more truly "the power of God" now: let us apply, then, the subject to ourselves. His words to us in the gospel of His grace are kinder far than any He ever spake to Zacchæus. Says His Apostle Paul: "He loved me and gave Himself for me." He learned this from that blessed Gospel. And we may all say the same; it is as true of us as of him. The Saviour was now passing on to Jerusalem, as men thought,

to set up His throne. But He was really going to die—to die for us. That death is the revelation of God's "inestimable love." It is the revelation also of His eternal mercy. And, taken along with the resurrection which followed, it gives the sure hope of the everlasting life. We have seen the effect on Zacchæus, of the Saviour's words of kindness. Let us receive into our hearts these words of the everlasting Gospel: the effect on us will be the same.

Zacchæus had been doing evil: he did henceforth no more. And we also, if we have been doing evil, will, "with grief and hatred of our sin, turn from it unto God." For "the love of Christ will constrain us." But perhaps we have been doing in the past what is outwardly good and right. We have been exemplary in our family relations, as husbands, fathers, masters, or as wives and mothers. We have been exemplary also, as citizens, neighbours, and friends. Then we shall find a new motive for doing all these things. St. Paul speaks in Romans of service "in newness of the Spirit." And he explains fully what he means by such language. "We have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." We know ourselves to be the objects of God's love, the heirs of His eternal mercy, the children of His grace. We render to him, therefore, what has been well called "new obedience," *i.e.*—obedience on new principles, the obedience, not of nature, nor of mere education, but of grace. And because our families and neighbours are objects of the same love with ourselves, because the same mercy waits on them, because the same hope is set before them, we have a new motive for loving and caring for them. As the same Apostle reminds us in Ephesians: "Be ye followers of God as dear children, and walk in love." And, again, in Thessalonians, "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love, one toward another, and toward all men!" For as the love revealed in Christ binds to God, on the one hand, it binds to man, on the other.

In this its double action lies the power of the blessed Gospel. And as our hearts come under that power, and we prove, as Zacchæus did, what God's salvation is, "men shall see our good works and glorify our Father in Heaven."

LINGERERS.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN VAUGHAN, D.D.

Preached in the Temple Church.

GENESIS XIX. 16.

"While he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand; . . . the Lord being merciful unto him."

THERE is a famous sermon on this text, now almost a hundred years old, by a true master of Israel. It is entitled, "Lingering in Religion." He tells his hearers how the prospect of standing from Sabbath to Sabbath, before the congregation, and that day particularly, had a heavy weight upon his spirit; how he had wearied himself in finding a text and a subject, and had begun to despair of doing so. And then he apostrophises himself very strikingly in some such strain as this: "What, no subject when souls are perishing round me? no subject when life is short and eternity long? no subject when Christ is trodden under foot, despite done to the Spirit, and God provoked every day!"

Brethren, the lessons of the Bible are never exhausted, and the spiritual necessities of the living are ever new, with the generation, the year, the day. These early chapters of the Bible are full of allegory as well as history,—a well spring of graphic and life like parable, in which God speaks in language once old and new, to the particular congregation and to the individual man.

This chapter is never more profitably handled as when it is read as the narrative of a sinner's escape from a city of destruction on his way to a refuge of life and peace, pointed out to him by some good evangelist on the everlasting hills.

The particular moment defined for us in the text is not that of the first awakening, nor of the first resolution for good. Already the call to escape has been heard and listened to; already it has even been faithfully handed on to others, in whose ears it sounds as the tale of one that mocketh. The

flight is resolved upon, the fugitive is on the threshold ready to forsake all the summons of duty. Yet he lingers. Many pleasant associations cluster round that home. His soul has often, indeed, been vexed in the sight and hearing of iniquities and idolatries there practised, repugnant to his principles, odious to his feelings. But there has been his home. All his property, all his acquaintance, all that has been his life, even the surrounding homes of his children, must be abandoned, and they perhaps in them. It cannot be but that many a longing look, many a clinging thought, many a fond regret, and many a bitter tear must be given to a scene thus endeared. His resolution is formed. Nothing can change or shake it. But he lingers: and this lingering, if it is protracted, will be as fatal as disobedience itself. With those he loves, or else without them, he must escape for his life, for the fire of God is about to fall, and if the accepted time be let slip, then the righteous must perish with the wicked.

While he lingered, therefore, the angels laid hold upon his hand to hasten the flight: and this urgency, however unwelcome, was a sign of grace. "*The Lord being merciful to him*" was its motive and its explanation.

Brethren, the subject thus stated is scarcely parable any longer. It speaks to us all with a meaning as simple as it is important. "*While he lingered*"—yes, lingering is just the word for us also. Which of us has any intention of passing his life, of making his home in the city of destruction? Which of us really believes that he can safely live and die in his sins, or that he can even live an utterly irreligious life without the greatest peril, or without the absolute certainty of losing his soul. Gathered here for worship, listening here to God's Word read and preached, there can scarcely be one of us who has cast in his lot with the scoffer or the sinner, or who would not feel it a reflection upon his character if he were addressed as one still in suspense as to the faith, or as to the morality of the Gospel.

And yet, my brethren, is there one of us who would have either the right or the will to resent the imputation of being more or less guilty of what the text calls *lingering?*

Let us think what *lingering* would be in its two chief aspects. There are lingerers in *believing*. For one person who has made up his mind that the Gospel is a fable, thousands hold it with a slight and timid grasp, as though it might fail them in their hour of need, or as though the evidence

for it were so unsubstantial that it were safer to be independent of it, safer, as many say, to rely upon mercy in the general, than upon a mercy purchased and promised and covenanted in Christ; as though neither particular fact nor particular doctrines of the Gospel were firm enough, or, at all events, sufficiently essential to have one's all ventured upon them for life and death.

This is a true description, you know it, and a largely growing number of persons fall under it. It is the result of many circumstances. I do not say peculiar to our generation, but certainly very prevalent in it. A general shake has been given to religious opinion; not so much by the progress of scientific discovery, for no Christian ought to have a moment's dread of that, but partly by the multiplication of theories calling themselves discoveries, but having no claim certainly as yet to that title: and partly by the confident talk of men who will represent *their* truth as the whole of truth, men who, being at home in a world of matter, declare matter to be the only world, or the only world which can be called real, quite for certain, and so dogmatise upon that other world of which they know nothing whatever with a positiveness deeply displeasing to the more humble and more modest thought and speech of the spiritual.

Now it ought, I think, to be evident that the very last effect of such experiences ought to be the multiplication of *lingerers* in believing. This is a faint-hearted and an unworthy attitude in the face of a foe so formidable. It ought to make us look thoroughly and anxiously into our evidences—and when I speak of evidences, I speak not of those written in books, but I speak rather of those deeper evidences which every grown-up man ought to have in abundance, written not on paper or tables of stone, but on what St. Paul calls "*the fleshy tables of the heart*"—transactions, I mean, with the God of the life concerning its most critical events, its most sacred secrets and communications between God and him, as conscious, as unmistakable as any that pass between minds and hearts and souls in the daily converse of the living, affecting conduct in its most vital point, the formation of habit, the discharge of duty, the grappling with temptation, and the conquest of sin. He who has this kind of evidence to adduce in support of a God that hears real prayer, a Saviour whose blood cleanses from actual sin, and a spirit who gives strength for practical duty, has no lack of direct proof against a man who tells him that nothing is but the visible, and he ought to be brave to avow convictions which have

at least as good a right to be listened to as arguments drawn from a world of matter, and unwarrantably turned against the existence of a world of spirit.

We can understand but too well being made a sceptic or an infidel under the kind of influences just referred to. But to be made a *lingerer* by them, to be made hesitating and vacillating in the faith of the Gospel by that which ought to summon the whole man and the heart to decision and determination for two worlds, this is as irrational as it is suicidal. Happy if such suspense be cut short by the severest exemplification of the text read now as parable, "*While he lingered*" the Divine messengers laid hold on his hand, and compelled him to think, to resolve, and to do.

Such is lingering in believing; and such lingerers lose of necessity all the joy and peace in believing, all the abounding in hope, and all the power of the Holy Ghost of which St. Paul tells as the Christian's experiences, as well as all that gratitude of confessing and witnessing which is the very least that a Christian can offer to the Saviour who shed for him His most precious blood. Lingerers in believing are many: and we would that this day might bring if it were but one to escape for the soul's life into the clear air, and into what the Psalmist calls "*the large room*" of a more robust and resolute Christianity.

The lingerers in *doing* are yet more and more pitiable. Oh, how many must there be within the sound of this voice who are deeply conscious at this moment of some definite step which they ought to be taking over the threshold of some old habit of evil, habit of clinging and clogging and besetting sin, but with which they have been parleying and dallying for long months and years, always intending to escape, but never actually doing it! How often have they heard the voice of God in the night season, as it were reproving, visiting, pleading with them for their life's sake, for their soul's sake, to make the mighty effort and be free! And how often has the effort been half made—made, perhaps, in their own strength, made, perhaps, under the influence of some lower motive, made, perhaps, in the particular instance, but not made on the whole or in the name of God, not earnestly and once for all! "*The kingdom of heaven*," our Lord says, "*suffereth violence*," and it is the "*violent who take it and that by force*." Surely He was describing then the very opposite of these lingerers. Surely He was teaching how the man who would be saved must comport himself both towards *believing* and towards *doing*. When there

has been a long spell in anyone of vacillating and temporising, nothing but a sort of moral violence has any chance of breaking it. Brethren, we believe that a week, or a day, or an hour might do it. Oh, if we were to determine, if one of us were to determine that he will not keep again as he is, that before the sun goes down he will settle the question between the two opinions, between the faith and the no faith, which are bidding for him, between the death of sin and the life of righteousness, which are the alternative, the only alternative, for each man born into a world of fallen nature, and yet of free will, we believe that in the might of God and in the grace of Jesus he could do it. We are not so weak as we pretend. The weakness lies in the lingering. God says, "*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, nor stay thou in all the plain, lest thou be consumed, and thou shalt live.*" Forgive the repetition, the reiteration, of the text, for the text is the subject: "*While he lingered, the men laid hold on his hand,*" and it was to compel him to action; "*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, nor stay thou in all the plain*"—"*the Lord being merciful.*"

We have but to add a word upon this laying hold of the hand. And here, too, we are on firm ground, for it is the ground of experience, and it is the ground of conscience. We believe that heaven and earth are much nearer together than we dream of. In those moments—and they are most real—of our existence in which we are stripped bare of earthly surrounding by some terrible shock of sorrow, or else—for their is another possibility—by some unaccountable laying low of the pride of self by a deep inner conviction of utter sinfulness—and I think that I speak here a thing true to fact and to the spiritual history of my hearers—in those moments so fearful, so ghastly in their vividness, what chance—what chance of your attention, of your toleration, will the man have who comes in to tell you that there is no God, that matter is all, that telescope and microscope are the only implements of knowing? "Nay," you can answer him with a voice which even he will tremble under: "The Word of God is quick and powerful; it is sharper than the two edged sword; and it has pierced me to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and it is, I feel it, a discerner of the thoughts and feelings of the heart. No created thing is obscured before it: all things are naked and open unto it, and unto Him with whom I have to do."

The methods of this dealing are multiform and manifold. The laying hold of the hand is a parable, and it has a world of applications. Oh,

that we were wise to read it in all the changes and chances of this life! Then would all impatience of calamity of misfortune, of earthly blight and mildew, of mortified ambition and baffled effort be changed into thankfulness to that anxiety which must chasten, to that love which would not let alone. When once the mysterious visitants are entertained as angels unawares, when once it is felt that heaven is open, and that God is interposing to speed the escape from a fiery deluge into a haven and heaven of peace, all will alter its first appearance, we shall feel that mercy is at work in the stripping and the unmasking, that flesh and blood, still more pride and vanity, worldliness and sensuality, sin and self cannot enter God's kingdom, and may preclude the entrance to the immortal soul, which has no home beside. Therefore the laying hold upon the hand, though it may be resented at the first touch as an interference or an impertinence, is felt on reflection as a mercy scarcely disguised. It is God's minister to thee for good. "*The Lord being merciful*" is the still small voice, audible through wind and fire and earthquake; and throughout eternity I shall be echoing it in grateful praise.

MOHAMMEDANISM.

By the REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, D.D.

ST. MATTHEW XXIV. 11.
"Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."

AT the present time the attention of the civilised world is directed to the events transpiring in Egypt. For many months past our country has been contending against hordes of savages, who are stimulated to fight by the belief that they are doing God's will, and securing to themselves an eternal reward. At their head is one who regards himself as specially deputed and destined to carry out the wishes of Mohammed and spread the religion of Islam. It will be timely, and, I trust, profitable, if we inquire into the origin and nature of that religious system which renders its votaries so desperately infatuated.

Mohammed, the prophet of Arabia, was born in April, 569 A. D., at Mecca, and descended from an honourable family. Losing his parents in youth, his training devolved upon his uncle, in whose employ he remained till he was twenty five years of age. He then married a wealthy widow lady, by which alliance he obtained both rank and riches. Being from his childhood of a thoughtful disposition and fond of solitude, he now retired from all commercial engagements, and devoted himself to meditation and prayer. He became deeply impressed with the lamentable extent to which idolatry prevailed. He thought of his own uncle, custodian of the Kaabeh at Mecca, the sacred shrine with its three hundred and sixty five idols, and its precious stone of paradise, brought, as it is believed, by Gabriel. He thought of the corruptions of the faith which existed on all hands; and he inquired whether it was not possible, and his duty, to restore the pure Theism which formed the basis of Judaism and Christianity. He determined to make this his life mission. This period of meditation and resolution was the turning point in his life. Had he then possessed the Gospel narratives as we have them: had the New Testament

teaching come under his serious consideration; had there been by his side one who, with love to Jesus, could have given him the true light "amid the meteoric lustres that flashed out from Eastern superstitions," he might have become a zealous and successful advocate of the cause of Christ. But he had not these advantages, and his steps turned in another direction. At the age of forty he began, in his prophetical character, to disseminate his faith. His first convert was his wife; then followed others of his relations; and, subsequently, he gathered about him quite a considerable number of followers in the space of three years. These he induced to believe some most extraordinary statements, and ventured to impose upon their credulity to a marvellous extent. Amongst other strange things he asserted that the Angel Gabriel came to him with a fiery steed, directed him to mount, conveyed him through the air with the swiftness of lightning, bore him to Mount Sinai and Bethlehem, where he prayed; thence to Jerusalem, where he entered the Temple and had an interview with Abraham, Moses, and Jesus; thence up a ladder of light into the seven heavens; and then into the presence of God Himself. After hearing directions from the lips of the Diety, he descended the ladder, remounted the steed, and was instantaneously transported and deposited in his bed—all this being accomplished in so brief a portion of time that a pitcher of water he had accidently upset when leaving his bed, at the call of Gabriel, had not reached the ground when he returned: he had upset the jug, passed away to Sinai, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and through the seven heavens, and back again in time to catch the jug in its fall and prevent the spilling of a drop of water. This "glaring instance of blasphemous audacity" was sworn to by one of his followers, was accepted by the multitude, and is still a fundamental portion of Moslem tradition.

But Mohammed's career was not free from persecution. The arrogant pretensions and audacious imposture which characterised him strengthened the hands of his opponents, so that he was compelled to quit Mecca and take up his abode in Medina. The time of his retreat is called the *Hegira* that is, the *Flight* or *Persecution*: and is the period from which the Moslem time is reckoned. That flight occured in the year 622, in the month of July. His entrance into Medina was marked by signs of loyal devotion on the part of the people. Mohammed purchased ground, erected a dwelling-house and mosque, and soon established himself as an independent sovereign. From that time onward his career was marked by car

nage and plunder. His motto seemed to be, "Death or Discipleship." Conversions to his faith were to be the product of the arm, not of the tongue. The sword was the instrument for disseminating his teaching, not the word. Religion was removed from the region of mental conviction to that of physical force. Not conscience, but compulsion reigned. He gave his followers liberty to appropriate to themselves the property of all whom they attacked. Females taken as captives were to be the wives and concubines of his band of freebooters; whilst he asserted, by way of encouragement, that "one drop of blood shed in the cause of God, or one night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months employed in fasting and prayer; whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermillion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim."

Such teaching fired the spirits of the fanatical Arabs, and they were ready to follow wherever the prophet conducted them. Having stormed and captured Mecca, he soon became master of the whole of Arabia, and then led an expedition into Syria, capturing several cities. During this career of bloodshed, a Jewess put poison with his food of which Mohammed and his companions partook. One of his attendants speedily died, but the prophet rallied. He never wholly lost the effects of the poison upon his system, and gradually sunk. On the 8th of June, 632, he laid his head upon the lap of Ayesha, his wife, who tried to soothe him in his sufferings. He ejaculated, "Eternity of Paradise!" "Pardon!" "The glorious associates on high!" and then ceased to breathe. The great prophet of Mecca had passed within the curtains that hide from us the spiritual world, and stood face to face with the Eternal Judge. So died, in his sixty fourth year, a man who, in the space of about ten years, had planted in the East a system of religion that has survived the vicissitudes of twelve centuries, and has at the present about 150,000,000 of our fellow creatures under its masterly control.

Dr. Deutsch sketches the portrait of Mohammed, as derived from the traditions, thus: "He was of middle height, rather thin, but broad of shoulders, wide of chest, strong of bone and muscle. His head was massive, strongly developed. Dark hair, slightly curled, flowed in dense masses down almost to his shoulders. Even in advanced age it was sprinkled by only about twenty grey hairs—produced by the agonies of

his 'Revelations.' His face was oval shaped, slightly tawny of colour. Fine, long, arched eyebrows were divided by a vein which throbbed visibly in moments of passion. Great, black, restless eyes shone out from under long, heavy eyelashes. His nose was large, slightly aquiline. His teeth, upon which he bestowed great care, were well set, dazzling white. A full beard framed his manly face. His skin was clear and soft; his complexion 'red and white'; his hands were 'as silk and satin,' even as those of a woman; his step was quick and elastic, yet firm, and as that of one, 'who steps from a high to a low place.' In turning his face, he would turn his whole body. His whole gait and presence were dignified and imposing. His countenance was mild and pensive. His laugh was rarely more than a smile. 'Oh, my little son!'—reads one tradition—'hadst thou seen him thou wouldst have said thou hadst seen a sun rising.' 'I,' says another witness, 'saw him in a moonlight night, and sometimes I looked at his beauty, and sometimes looked at the moon, and his dress was striped with red, and he was brighter and more beautiful to me than the moon.'"*

Different opinions of the character of Mohammed will ever exist. Some pronounce him to have been a conscientious, devout, and earnest man. Others take a very opposite view. Luther regarded him as "a devil, and the firstborn child of Satan." Melancthon considered that he was "inspired by Satan," and Prideaux pronounced him "a wilful and intentional deceiver from first to last."

From time to time during his career as prophet, Mohammed dictated sentences to his amanuenses upon matters of faith and practice. These were written on palm leaves, pieces of leather, bits of wood, slabs of stone, and even on shoulder bones of sheep; and these were all kept in a large chest in the prophet's house. Some of the sentences were copied by his disciples; some were committed to memory by his admirers, but no complete copy existed during his life. After his decease these scattered sentences, which were in the utmost confusion, were collected and arranged. The longest chapters were placed first, without respect to date or subject. Quantity, not quality, gave the precedence in the construction of the volume. The book thus formed is called the "Koran" which signifies: "That which ought to be read." Sometimes it has the article as a prefix, and is termed "Al Koran," or "The reading." The volume is divided

*Dr. Emanuel Deutsch on Islam, in *Quarterly Review.*

into one hundred and fourteen portions, or Suras. Some copies of the Koran having been discovered with some slight variations of reading, all the versions were submitted to a revising committee. A perfect text was thus secured, a standard edition published, and all previous copies were collected and burnt. This sacred book among the Mohammedans is regarded with superstitious reverence. It is asserted that the Koran possesses higher inspiration than the Christian Scriptures, because in it God Himself is the only speaker direct to His one prophet, whilst in the Christian Scriptures the inspiration comes through many holy men. By the Mussulmans the book is considered not only to contain a sacred message, but to be in itself a sacred object. They will not touch it without first being washed and purified. When they read it they hold it above their girdles and handle it most reverently. They consult it as an oracle in every time of perplexity. They commit its sentences to memory, in order to repeat them as a charm against sin, and they inscribe portions upon their banners when going out to war to stimulate the soldiers in conflict. The contents of the Koran are evidently gathered from many sources. Its oldest portions are close imitations of the Old Testament prophecies. Considering the time when, and the circumstances under which, it was compiled, the book possesses literary merit of no mean order; but it can never bear comparison with our Old and New Testaments. There are puerilities and stories unbecoming a revelation from God. Thus, for example, we are told of "Seven sleepers" who were kept dormant in a cave for three hundred and nine years, God thus preserving them because they would not worship idols, Sura xviii). We are informed that the golden calf made by the Israelites in the wilderness began to low (Sura xx. 90); that Joseph sent to his father that he was living by sending him an inner garment, the smell of which Jacob recognised, and by it was cured of his blindness (Sura xii. 95); that the people of the "city near the sea" were changed into apes because they fished on the Sabbath (Sura iii. 166). A terrible genius conveyed the Queen of Sheba's throne to Solomon in the twinkling of an eye (Sura xvii. 40). Job struck the ground with his foot, and forthwith bubbled up a liniment for his sores (Sura xxxvii. 41–3). Polygamy, revenge, wife-beating, and other evils are sanctioned. Contradictions also are conspicuous. Thus, in one place, the faithful are directed to turn in prayer toward Jerusalem; in another they are told to turn toward Mecca, whilst in the third they are assured that it does not matter in what direction they turn. In

one part idolaters are ordered to be tolerated, whilst in another part it is said they should be exterminated. In one chapter the day of judgment is said to be a period of one thousand years, and in another chapter it is asserted that it will last fifty thousand years. Such things are internal evidences that the book is of purely human construction, and not, as Mussulmans believe, uncreated and eternal.

From this brief but general view of the prophet and his Koran, let us glance at the religion which he founded and his book expresses. Mohammed gave to his religion the name of "Islam"—a word which signifies "the entire surrender of the will to God"—and his followers, those who surrender themselves to God, are termed Moslem or Mussulmans. Now, Islam, or Mohammedanism is divided into two portions—faith and practice. The former has six points or doctrines.

1. There is belief in one omnipotent, omniscient, all merciful God, expressed in the familiar formula, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His prophet.

> "One God"—the Arabian prophet preached to man;
> One God the Orient still
> Adore, through many a realm of mighty span,
> A God of Power and Will,
> A God that shrouded in His lonely light
> Rests utterly apart
> From all the vast creations of His might—
> From Nature, Man, and Art.

The Scriptual doctrine of the Trinity in Unity is repudiated by Mohammed throughout the Koran. The unity of the Godhead may be said to be the foundation stone of Islam. Thus we read, "Say not there are three Gods; forbear this, it will be better for you. God is but one God" (Sura iv. 169); and, again, "They are certainly infidels who say God is the third of three; for there is no God besides one God." (Sura v. 7.)

2. A second article of faith is the existence of angels who have varied forms and offices. Some gaze upon God's glory, some sing jubilant hymns, some minister to men. The Mohammedans believe that to each man there are two guardian angels, constantly observing and recording his actions. But there are four angels that are said to occupy specially honourable positions. One is Gabriel, who has close conferences with the Deity and records the Divine decrees. The second is Michael, the friend

and protector of the Jews. The third is Azrael, the angel of death, who sunders the intimate connection between soul and body. And the fourth is Israfil, whose work it will be to sound the trumpet at the last day.

3. The third article of faith is in the Scriptures. The Mohammedans are taught that at different periods in the world's history God has given revelations of His will; that the number of such sacred books is one hundred and four; that ten were given to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Enoch, ten to Abraham, and the other four were delivered successively to Moses, David, Jesus, and Mohammed. All of these, it is affirmed, are lost, except the last four, and of these the only reliable book is the Koran, because of the alterations and corruptions which, it is asserted, have affected the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospel. The Koran, therefore, is placed before the faithful as the book to which special and constant attention should be given.

4. The next article of faith is in a divinely-appointed series of prophets. According to one tradition these number 224,000. All of these are believed to have been free from great sins and errors; but six stand conspicuously out as bringing new laws of dispensations. These are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed.

5. Belief in a general resurrection and a day of judgment. Mohammed writes with marvellous certainty about those things which the Christian Scriptures do not fully disclose. He teaches that angels, men, and animals will all rise at the sound of the last trump; that they shall be gathered upon the earth's plain, the day of judgment each man and woman will pass two trials—one when his good and bad actions will be weighed in balances by Gabriel, and the other when the only passage from earth to heaven has to be passed. This passage is said to be a bridge arching over the centre of hell, so slender that it is finer than the finest hair, and so keen that it is sharper than the finest edge of a sword. Infidels will be blind when they attempt to cross it, and will fall into the abyss below: but the faithful shall pass over safely, and joyfully enter paradise. Hell, they believe, has seven stories, or apartments, destined for distinct classes of sinners and varied in their degree of punishment. Heaven is a place of sensual pleasure. Mohammed's description may have no attractions for some of us, especially when he tells us that the meanest occupant shall have eighty thousand servants, seventy-two wives; shall select his food from three hundred dishes of gold, all of which, filled with rare dainties, shall

be placed before him at once, with as many vessels full of as many kinds of wine. Mohammed seemed incapable of conceiving of any higher joy than that of the senses. Hence, he says, that the faithful shall be clothed in the richest silks and brocades, will be adorned with bracelets of gold and crowns set with pearls, will recline on soft embroidered couches, will walk amid green trees upon which luscious fruits shall hang within reach, will listen to sweet music strains, and enjoy perpetual youth.

6. The sixth point of faith is that of God's absolute decree and predestination of good and evil—which doctrine was added by Mohammed to stimulate his followers in fight. Each man to day rushes out with the fatalist belief that if he be decreed to die the utmost caution and cowardice would not prolong his life, and that to die for God and God's prophet secures entrance into paradise.

The second part of the religion is *practice*, which Mohammed divided into four branches. *Prayer*, which is to be offered five times each day, is is spoken of as "the pillar of religion" and "the key of Paradise." Prayer is not permitted when the worshipper is arrayed in sumptuous apparel, nor are women allowed to pray in public with men. *Alms* or charity, each man being bound to give a portion of his income to the cause of religion or benevolence. Almsdeeds are regarded as highly meritorious. Mohammedans say that "prayer carries us half way to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms procure us admission." *Fastings*, or abstinence, which is binding on healthy adults, and which must extend over thirty days. Mohammed said that fasting was "the gate of religion," and that "the odour of the mouth of him who fasteth is more grateful to God than that of musk." The whole month of Ramadan—that is, the month in which it is believed that Koran was sent from heaven—is observed as a strict fast. But the rules of the fast apply only from sunrise to sunset. During the night the devotee can eat or drink as heartily as he may please. As a fourth point are *Pilgrimages to Mecca*, concerning which Mohammed said that he who dies without performing the pilgrimage once in his life may as well die a Jew or a Christian. These pilgrimages have changed in their character, and are now pronounced to be "a sad business of mingled money-making, vagabondism, and immorality."

Such is the religious system which Mohammed built up from the Jewish Scriptures and other sources. As we read the Koran and observe the reverence which the Mussulmans cherish toward it, the obedience they display

to the commands of their prophet, and the regularity of their devotions, we cannot but feel that we who are Christians, with privileges of a higher order, with promises unspeakably precious, with the spiritual presence of a loving Saviour, and the gracious help of the Holy Ghost, ought to be more faithful to God and His Word than we are. The children of Islam may well rise up in judgment against us.

The contrast between Mohammedanism and Christianity is immense. The Koran repudiates the divinity of Jesus and represents Him as a prophet of God like Mohammed. It denies that Christ died on the cross for men. It rejects the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice for sin, and teaches that each man must secure eternal salvation by his own works. Mohammedanism makes subjects: Christianity makes converts. Mohammedanism demands an unreasonable assent: Christianity says, "Prove all things." Mohammedanism presents God as a Sovereign only: Christianity teaches us to regard him as our Father. Mohammedanism is propagated by the sword. Christianity has spread despite the sword. The triumph of Mohammedanism is military, that of Christianity moral. Lord Houghton has expressed the contrast thus:—

> Mohammed's truth lay in a holy book;
> Christ's in a sacred life.
> So, while the world rolls on from change to change
> And realms of thought expand,
> The letter stands without expanse or range,
> Stiff as a dead man's hand.
> While, as the life-blood fills the growing form,
> The spirit Christ has shed
> Flows through the ripening ages fresh and warm,
> More felt than heard or read.

Mohammedanism knows nothing of the regeneration of a man's soul: nothing of the crisis when the man by faith passes from death unto life: nothing of spiritual freedom, spiritual purity, and soul discipline, nothing of any vital, endearing, and nourishing relation between the human heart and the heart of Infinite Love: nothing of the blissful anticipation of being assimilated to the likeness of God, and admitted to the beatific presence of God, and mental and spiritual communion with God throughout eternal ages. Mohammedanism is a religion of the senses. It is visible, formal, outward, sensuous, and barren. *J*

St. Giles' Lectures, Edinburgh, Second Series.

The rapidity with which Mohammedanism spreads after the demise of its founder is remarkable. In eighty two years from that time the greater portion of the then known world was under its influence, and more than half the then known inhabitants had embraced the faith of Islam. Still it continued to spread, till, in the eleventh century, India became its latest acquisition.

The causes of the rapid progress of Mohammedanism are several, and they deserve a moment's notice, especially as the speedy growth of the new religion is used by Mussulmans as an argument in favour of the Divine origin of their system.

1. There was the *condition of the world* at the time Mohammed started upon his prophetic mission. Whilst Paganism prevailed, Christianity had, alas! become lamentably tinged with idolatry. Christendom was distracted with Mary-worship, saint worship, and martyr worship. The Oriental Christian Church was the scene of senseless controversies, innumerable heresies, and shameless idolatries. There were Arians, Sabellians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Ebonites, Beryllians, Nazarenes, Collyridians, these Sabeans and Magians, and all split up into minor sections to a number wearying to the patience to enumerate, all contending bitterly against each other. A keen sighted man like Mohammed would discern that the time was peculiarly favourable for a reformer or an impostor. It was only necessary that a man of power should step forth amid the raging elements in order to hush them into obedient fulfilment of his word.

2. Then Mohammed's system appealed to the *natural pride* of the human heart. The religion of Christ demands self-surrender, self-denial, self abnegation; but Islamism taught man to believe that the merit of his own works would suffice to save him. With *self* was entrusted the task of winning paradise.

3. Again, Mohammedanism declared the doctrine of the absolute equality of all the faithful in the esteem of Allah and the State. It knew nothing of name, rank, or riches. All were equal as believers—all one brotherhood. The poor, the outcast, and the oppressed found in this teaching a marvellous fascination.

4. Then add to these causes its appeal to man's warlike aptitude. Combativeness is natural to man. The struggles of life more or less develop the fighting instinct. The difficulties, physical, mental, moral, and social, are overcome by the exercise of the spirit of conflict. When a man becomes

convinced that there are evils which God would have him crush, and duties God would have him perform, the aptitude for combat becomes more vigorous and manifest. Mohammed knew this. He made fanatics of his followers. He taught them that God and the angels were on their side, and they went forth to fight for the spread of Islam. So the Moslems shouted, "Fight! the angels are with us; the devils with our foe." Thus is it that to this day they will, with reckless daring, rush upon the serried ranks of their opponents, believing in the favour of God, and, if they fall, an entrance into eternal bliss.

These reasons suffice to account for the triumphs of the Crescent over the Cross in Oriental climes. But, alas! Mohammedanism has no power to regenerate a man or a community. It can excite, but it cannot renew. It can stimulate, but it cannot sanctify. It can stir the man to fight with men, but not to cherish faith in God's love and sympathy. It is a religion of the flesh. We must turn to our beloved Christianity for that which touches the heart and transforms the life by the movement of grace within. We must come to Christ for that all-constraining power within which will keep us true to God in private and in public; which will strengthen us to forbear and to forgive, to work and to wait, to suffer and submit, to do and to die and God may be glorified.

"CALVARY," M. MUNKACSY.

PAINTING BY MICHAEL MUNKACSY.

BY THE REV. DAVID DAVIES.

Preached in Regent's-park Chapel, Sunday, May 24, 1885.

ST. LUKE XXIII, 46–49.

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the Ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed Him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding those things."

(Read also, I St. John, iii, 16.)

In the forty fourth verse we read "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour." Darkness at noon! Midday becomes midnight. The clouds gather and hide the awful tragedy from the eye of heaven. It is the hour and the power of darkness.

It is with much hesitation that I take this event for our theme. Tragic as it is, by reason of its thrilling surroundings, it is still more awful in its own mysterious significance. Hence we would bow the head with reverence, and take our shoes from off our feet, for the place whereon we stand is holy ground.

This is the hour of transition. The clouds which we saw gather as the Christ left the Prætorium, in that awful aërial perspective so powerfully depicted by Gustave Doré, have now covered the sky, and darkness fills the air. The savage play of passion which surged around the great Saviour as He descended the steps from the Prætorium on the way to Calvary has now subsided. The uncontrollable anger of the rulers and of the mob has been satiated by the deed of blood. The hoarse cry, "Crucify Him!" has been hushed in the darkness. The deed is done. The heavy

blows of the executioner's axe are heard no more: the "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!" has already rent the air and pierced the darkness, and now there is audible only the low whispers of the assembled throng and the suppressed sobs of the Marys.

It is now that the last exclamations—"It is finished," and, "Father, into Thy hands I commended My Spirit"—are heard. These triumphant cries touch earth and sky. Gleams of light tremble in the darkness, the veil of the Temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the earth quakes, and many graves give up their sainted dead. There is divinity in that voice which draws forth a response from heaven and earth.

It is the hour of transition to that multitude, too, from the excitement of a deed to the reflection which follows its accomplishment: that hour in the life of every man who has been guilty of a crime—the hour when the enthusiasm necessary to perform a cruel deed has been expended in its performance, and when, in the terrible reaction, man falls back upon his miserable self to reflect and to realise the full significance of his act. Such is the bitter experience which now overtakes the unruly mob, and which possesses the hearts and minds of those rulers who have led them on to the deed of blood. The three hours of darkness have given them time to reflect. These three hours have been to them like an eternity. Many have left the scene, have slunk away in the darkness; others dare not go lest the open earth receive them into its darker depths.

I am not likely soon to forget my visit yesterday to the hall where Munkacsy's painting, entitled "Calvary," is exhibited. I entered the room a few minutes before noon. Just then the sun shone brightly in the heavens, the morning clouds were dispersed, and all seemed to give promise of a bright afternoon in Spring. But I had no sooner entered the room, and looked at that picture—with its three crosses, its moving agitated throng, and its black sky above, painted in darkest colours and only relieved by a silvery gleam lining the summits of the distant hills, and a subdued yellow hue in mid-sky—than a dimness began to fill the room and a gloom to envelop that wonderful picture. The spectators could but faintly distinguish each other, the darkness thickened and descended, only a few figures remained dimly visible on the canvas—the Christ, the malefactors, the Marys, John, the executioner, and a few of the more prominent figures—the others had disappeared. Just then the heavens sent forth a sound, the clouds flashed lightning which for

an instant lit up the whole scene, but only left it darker than ever. A clock in the neighbourhood was heard to toll slowly and solemnly the mid-day hour. It seemed as if it would never finish—everything appeared so tragic and real: and when it finished, what an awful silence! The hush of a great darkness rested upon us; not a word was uttered. Then I thought of those words which I have just read: "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour." I remembered that on that ever memorable hour, so imperfectly, at best, depicted by human art, there was a darkness far greater than that which, amid such surroundings, had subdued us. I was overcome, and felt as if I were no longer in London amid the pulsations of the commercial world of the nineteenth century, but very near Calvary, witnessing for myself the great tragedy of the ages. The thunderstorm passed, the light gradually returned, the dark shadows of the picture which had disappeared revealed themselves, and the full details came to light. But the impression of that brief, dark interval remained, and for that experience the scene on Calvary will be more real, and the surroundings more vivid to me as long as I live. The painting is in itself the most living picture I have ever seen. Every figure is instinct with life, there seems to be no canvas but a moving, startled and excited throng, a quaking earth, three crosses, and a dark terrible sky. The associations of yesterday conspired to make that reality complete and irresistible.

Looking at that painting we see the three crosses erected at different angles. The central figure is, of course, that of our Lord. We do not care to look at it too closely: but we see that as yet His side has not been pierced: the Roman soldier, with spear in hand, is seated at a little distance to the left of the Saviour, amazed at the sight. Much less do we care to scrutinise too nearly that countenance; there is, as there should be, a mystery about it. It bears the signs of more than physical anguish, and His brow bears the marks of that token of royalty which is peculiarly His—the crown of thorns. The impress of death is fast settling upon those sacred features, and the open mouth which has just uttered the triumphant cry of the Great Victor is now silent. What a contrast between His countenance and those of the malefactors on both sides! His is the face of One whom we have already heard exclaim: "I have power to lay down My life: I have

power to take it up again." That countenance expresses, even in death, the strength of patience and the triumph of self sacrifice; while the countenances of the malefactors—one to a very shocking extent—bear the brutal stamp of a life of crime.

The picture abounds with such contrasts. At the foot of Christ's cross—and thus nearest of all to Him—is Mary, his mother. She is too weak to tell her sorrow; but, placing her pale, beautiful countenance upon her clasped hands, which rest upon His pierced feet, she closes her eyes, is dumb in her grief, and looks as if the heart that had kept the Divine secrets for more than thirty years must now break, and that the prophecy of Simeon is at length fulfilled, since a sword has pierced her soul. Upon her left, and by her side, is Mary Magdalene, in a frenzy of grief, with long, flowing, auburn hair, and with her countenance buried in her hands. The contrast here between silent and demonstrative grief is striking. To their left stands Mary, the mother of John and James. In her puckered brow, her piercing glance, and her keen, strong, expressive countenance, as, with outstretched arms, she looks up to the Christ, who has just uttered His last words, there is a subtle blending of surprise and anguish which must find open expression. On the right of the three women is John the beloved disciple, the only representative of the apostolic company, more feminine in appearance than we should have expected, but mute in grief, bearing manfully the mystery of the hour, and standing near, not his mother, but that other sacred charge so recently committed to him by those lips now silent in death.

There is another figure behind the Cross—on its shadowy side—leaning against it convulsed with grief. And so the group gathers round this central cross. Here, again, we are struck with a contrast. There are none who gather round the other crosses; there is no attractive power in them. It is the central cross that draws, thus early giving partial fulfilment to the great Sufferer's prediction: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." On the left of Jesus is the impenitent thief, already dead. The ponderous way in which that dead body hangs is most graphically portrayed. On the right of Jesus is the penitent thief, bearing, it is true, upon his countenance the brand of crime, but with a ray of hope lighting up, and subduing, the worst lines of his guilty countenance, as he turns towards the Christ in whom he has placed all his trust.

In the centre of the picture, and by way of contrast to the devoted group round the cross, is the stalwart executioner taking his departure. Bearing a ladder made of poles and rungs of crooked growth, and untouched by plane, which is carelessly poised upon his right shoulder, and carrying a Roman axe in his left hand, this man of stolid, brutal countenance scowls at the women as he tramps steadily and carelessly by, evidently proud of his unholy calling. Upon the whole canvas there is no countenance—those of the malefactors not excepted—more repulsive and barbaric.

A Roman soldier is seen busily clearing the way with his spear for this hero of the hour, a lad close by looks with curious awe upon the executioner, while others are engaged with other thoughts. Beyond these is the mounted Roman centurion, looking with keen surprise upon the central cross. That centurion has presided over the executions. He had doubtless done similar duty before. He was no novice at work. He had, also, seen many a brave soldier die upon the battle field, seen many a heroic Roman fall, and, as his blood flowed forth, writing "Vici!" (I have conquered!) on his shield; but he had never seen a death like this. He had never heard such a triumphant exclamation—claiming kinship with the Divine—as "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and never so gracious a petition from dying lips for the foe as "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Hence the startled centurion exclaims: "Truly this was the Son of God"; and thus, too, with one hand outstretched in wonder and the other placed to his right ear, as if to catch the faintest whisper that may yet proceed from those Divine lips, he stands before us as one of the most prominent and effective figures in the whole painting. Contrasting with him, and at a little distance to his right is another mounted Roman officer, who tries to conceal beneath the dignity and strength of his powerful aristocratic countenance every sign of emotion, but only succeeds in part, for misgiving and dissatisfaction are plainly traceable in every line.

In the centre and foreground there is one very prominent man whose open hands and strained position, as in startled attitude he looks backward toward the cross, present a triumph of artistic skill. He starts out of the canvas like a living being. Near him, and in the left foreground of the picture, there are two rulers of the people, who walk gently down the slope of the hill, and at variance with each other. One is a venerable man with white flowing beard, upon whose knitted brows and ex-

pressive countenance, as he looks downward to the earth, is depicted a sad and painful misgiving. He evidently thinks that they have not heard the last of that death, that the blood of the innocent Sufferer will still cling to their skirts, and that the darkness of the last three hours was not meaningless, but was the frown of heaven. He is one of the finer spirits of the age—Gamaliel it may be. On his left, and nearer the spectator, is a younger man, who is blatant and self assertive, and who, with a wave of the hands, dismisses all doubt, and affirms that He who had so misled the people and called Himself God must needs be put to death. So powerfully is he produced that we seem to hear those dogmatic and violent words as they are projected from his wide and open mouth. Behind these are two others, one of whom, the younger and the nearer to us, might well be Joseph of Arimathea, who, with hands slightly uplifted and eyes fixed upon the central cross, is evidently drawn to the great Sufferer. Near him is an elder of the people, who, as he strokes his beard with his left hand, casts a side glance at the Christ, his upturned countenance revealing a subtle admixture of gratification and surprise. Behind them and slightly to the right, beyond and just in a line with the extreme end of the executioner's ladder, are two other leaders of the people. They are half concealed in the throng. One is exceedingly sad, perplexed, and timid—he may be Nicodemus—the other is one of those sleek, smirking men who are never shocked by any deed, but are satisfied that all is for the best so long as their interests are unaffected. To their left is a Jew on horseback, who still exults in the crucifixion, while to his right are two others, who think and feel very differently. In the left foreground is a mounted sheikh, who, as he is about to leave, has been arrested by that last cry, and suddenly looks back. Upon his keen, powerful countenance indignation and misgiving struggle fiercely for the mastery. It is the face that has the most of conflict in it in the whole of the vast canvas. To his right, on the extreme left of the picture, is a man who, with a sinister, treacherous face and terrified look, hurries down the hill. Desperation is stamped upon that brow, and the fires of hell are kindled in that breast, whose covering is convulsively grasped by his guilty hands. Judas, now hanged, could not have presented a sadder picture when he hurried from the upper room into dark night outside. This man may have been one of the false witnesses against the Christ, who sold his conscience and, worst of all, the world's Saviour for greed. Or can it be Barrabas, "the world's

choice?" Whoever he is, he can exist no longer there; he flies anywhere, anywhere—it may be—out of the world.

Brethren, this picture is true now. The cross of Christ still divides the world. The Gospel is the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, to men to-day. It divides the world.

The Cross draws more than ever before. The number of those who gather round the Cross has increased a million-fold. The watchword of redeemed thousands is, "The love of Christ constraineth us." The story of the Cross in all its tragic mystery, and its tender and pathetic significance, has brought them to His feet. It also *repels* as of old; the man depicted as rushing from it in the desperation of guilt is a representative of a class to-day that numbers its thousands. How many who have crucified anew the Lord of glory, and trodden under foot the Son of God, have sought to fly from His presence in the agony of remorse! It will not be peculiar to the Judgment Day that men shall say to the mountains and rocks: "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." They flee from the Saviour's presence *now*. A religious service is the most terrible thing they can endure: and the proclamation of Christ as the Saviour is the one unbearable message against which they close their ears and from which they hide away.

The Cross *awakens conscience* still, as in the case of the centurion: it also *hardens*, as in the case of some of the rulers of the people. It melts or makes hard as adamant. Such a love cannot be resisted save at the cost of sacrificing our finest sensibilities and noblest impulses. It draws forth *adoring wonder* from those who trust in it: it also calls forth *angry blasphemy* from those who will not accept it. We have not to go far in this city to witness both.

But, brethren, how much brighter the Cross appears to the adoring throng who surround it now than it appeared to the little group who, with loving hearts, gathered round it in that hour of gloom, eighteen centuries ago. The light that streams from the resurrection morn has transfigured the Cross. In the brief space of three days these very Marys became messengers of the resurrection. In forty days the apostles, who all—save one—had been scattered every one to his own, were given the commission of the Risen Christ. And in later days we hear John—now mute, and pensive with grief at the Cross—exclaim, in the full assurance of faith:

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our life for the brethren."

It is to this "*conclusion of the whole matter*"—*an inspired after-thought*—by one who had witnessed its progress from the beginning, that I now call your attention.

We have here (1) *The announcement of a new revelation*, or *The science of true religion.* The theme is *love.* The word, as we know, was new in the Greek tongue, and hitherto unknown in the classics. It was the direct product of Christianity as the virtue of which it was expressive was distinctly Christian. A new creation had dawned upon the world, a new word, therefore, must be projected into human speech.

"Hereby *know* we love" (R. V.), said John. It had existed before, but man had not *know* it until Christ died. All energies are invisible, and every principle must become incarnate before we can "perceive" or "know" it. Every invisible energy has it own favourite medium of manifestation. As such love has. It cannot be defined in words; it must be embodied in a deed or life. Even God could not define love so that man could understand it. It must become "*manifest* in the flesh." Further, love's favourite medium of manifestation is sacrifice. Love has ever a cross, Calvary. It ever asks, "What can I give or suffer?" Sacrifice is greatest when it is the sacrifice of a life; and the sacrifice of a life is greatest when it is the sacrifice of one's own life. Bring the Divine gift to this test. "Hereby perceive we the love of God *because He laid down His life for us.*"

The death of our Lord is spoken of here as a *sacrifice* for us. It is therefore spoken of as the revelation of His love. It is this mighty upheaval, if I may so express it, that brings to light what was hitherto hidden. The projections of shelving rock to the very surface of "Calvary," as represented in the picture, suggests a figure. The geologist reads with intense interest the different strata that transverse some high cliff, for he sees there the grave yards of buried worlds bearing upon their stony tablets in grand hieroglyphics the "In Memoriam" of ages. But all these were brought to light by one mighty convulsion. That upheaval only reveals a part of what lies under foot everywhere in grand characters written in tables of stone. Even thus, would I say with reverence, the death of our Lord is that one mighty upheaval which brings to light the eternal foundations of "love" as it exists primarily in God.

To change the figure. The love of God flows in unbroken current in heaven. There is no sin there to surmount, no fall to span, and, therefore, there is no opportunity presented for the manifestation of its highest possibilities. It might have thus gone on in its even, mighty, grand, unbroken flow, and men never see it, and angels only see it in part. Those who have visited the Niagara tell us that a few miles above the falls no one can imagine what volume of water that mighty stream contains, and of what force it is capable. Before you "*know*" Niagara you must see it rush over the precipice, and hear it roar in waterfalls, and brawl in cataracts, as it leaps down into the depths beneath, and loses itself in a pillar of cloud. So angels see the steady current of Divine love on the plains of heaven; but it is as it descends over the steeps of light in cataracts to earth that "angels desire to look into it." And here even God "commendeth His love in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

2. *We have here the statement of a new duty*, or the *Art of true religion*.—The verse begins with theology, it ends with duty: it begins with a creed, it ends with practice. The religion of Jesus Christ is essentially practical.

This little word "and" connects our life to Christ's—the infinitesimally small to the infinitely great. This is in harmony with all Divine working. Take the telescope, and you see God's wonders in the almost infinitely great and distant: take the microscope, and you none the less see Divine wonders in the infinitesimally small and near. The light that glistens in the dewdrop and sparkles in infant's eye, comes from the sun in the distant heavens. St. John here traces back the principle which should govern our little lives to the divinest and greatest example. Thus the cross of Christ becomes an inspiration to duty. Our Lord said: "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." The cross reveals the compass of that word "as." Crossbearing becomes a new fact in history. "Bear ye one another's burdens," and thus fulfil the law of Christ. It could be the law of no one else; only He who bore so heavy a cross could give so great a commandment. Rob us of the cross, and you rob us of the motive force to the highest philanthropy and self denial. The love that redeems is the love that inspires; the love that reveals is the love that transforms; the fuller the revelation, the higher the duty; and the more abundant the grace, the greater the commandment. The commandment

never comes to us so mightily by precept as by example: and no example is so powerful as that of self-sacrifice. Christ has taken the grand initiative, and while offering for us a sacrifice which only He could offer—for it is the atonement for our sins—He has also presented to us an example that we should follow His footsteps, and the commandment coming through the medium of that great example comes to us with all the pathos and force of a Gospel. The steps of the Christ are far in advance of ours; but be it ours to "follow on to know the Lord." What centuries it has taken the Church of Christ to comprehend, in a small measure, the spirit of the Master and the genius of his Gospel! With what wondrous patience He bears with us, bringing us up as by a gentle inclined plane to the level of our privileges and responsibilities! May the story of "Calvary" be more and more a transforming power as well as an Evangel of Divine Love; and may the love that has redeemed us make us like our Redeemer in our sympathy with the sorrowing and charity toward the fallen!

CREATION IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE AND OF SCIENCE.

By the REV. J. R. TAFT, F. G. S.

Preached at the Reunion of Past and Present Students, Queen's College, Birmingham.

GENESIS i. 1.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

IN this simple sentence Revelation solves a problem which has occupied the minds of men for ages past, and teaches us that matter is not eternal, and that the world came not into existence by chance. As the imaginative mind takes its flight through the immense spheres of the universe, and by the assistance of the telescope traverses the regions of space, it obtains glimpses of tremendous power and infinite wisdom which call forth strains of highest praise and most ardent adoration. And, when led by the hand of science to investigate the lower places of the earth, and to examine the texture of the mighty rocks and everlasting hills: when by the aid of the microscope it sees the various forms of life which have peopled the globe, and realises the vast mausoleum of the earth, the thoughtful man is convinced that it was no fortuitous concourse of atoms which formed the orb on which we live, but at each step he marks evidences of order, wisdom, design, and plan, which the mind refuses to attribute to chance, and indications of adaption of means to an end which are not the result of any "source of spring of order originally in matter," but are footprints of an Almighty and infinitely wise Creator. Thus ranging through celestial and terrestrial phenomena, he realizes that man is but a speck in space, a moment in time: and, constrained by reverential awe, in lowly homage he worships the Infinite, saying, "Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him?" "O, Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all."

Truth, whenever and wherever found, is one and universal. God is truth. He cannot deny Himself. Therefore, whether we ponder the revelation of the Most High given in Holy Scripture, or that which He has

imprinted upon His works, both testify to the same great truth, and speak in unmistakable accents of His eternal power and Godhead.

These are days of scientific investigation and research, when the dark clouds of doubt and unbelief are gathering thickly around us. It behooves, therefore, every intelligent Christian, and especially the teacher of religion, fairly and candidly to face the difficulties placed before him by literary and scientific inquirers of modern times, and to acquaint himself well with the verities of the Christian faith. But if the Church neglects this most obvious duty, can we be surprised that rank unbelief and grosser infidelity become rampant amongst us? The supposed discrepancies between science and religion are not to be disposed of by discrediting the senses, nor by denying that religion and science have any connection with each other. Religion does touch the material world at certain points, and the senses are trustworthy guides within certain limits: so that beyond all question it is our duty to respect every clearly proved fact in science as having a place in the eternal temple of truth. But fact is one thing; theory and hypothesis are quite another. These may change and alter as time goes on and knowledge advances; but that—like as a firm rock on a raging sea remains fixed and the same, amidst the confusion of the elements and the violence of the waves—remains unchanged through all upheavings of modern thought. Theory may change and vary, as generations come and go: but truth knows no alteration. It remains ever the same, ever constant—it is eternal. It is, therefore, the duty of the theologian and the Christian philosopher to show the points where religion and science meet, to demonstrate the limits within which the senses may be exercised, to distinguish between the facts and theories of science, and to repudiate the one and insist upon the other.

Much has been said of the conflict between science and religion. In reality there is no such thing. The interpreters of each have varied greatly; but as time rolls on, as knowledge increases, as light becomes clearer and reason triumphs over prejudice, scientists and theologians are becoming more united, and both acknowledge the truth and sublimity of our text: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Whether we affirm that the present natural phenomena have been produced by the creative activity of God being put forth at certain epochs, or to have resulted from progressive evolutions, still it must be admitted that it was the same creative activity which accomplished the work, and

the truth of the first sentence of Revelation remains unaltered: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Supposing the theory of evolution to be true and established, still physical science has not solved the problem. The great truth asserted in our text remains unaltered. There is design; who was the designer? There are laws; who enacted them? There is matter; who furnished it? The world had a beginning; who began it? These and similar questions the theory of evolution does not answer. But what science does not answer, what the wisdom of man has never been able to unravel, the words of our text make plain: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

I. When was the work of creation performed? Almost all ancient nations have traditions respecting the origin of the universe, which differ in detail according to the peculiar disposition of the people. How and when these traditions arose modern criticism does not say. Christians have found in their resemblance a presumption in favour of believing that they derive their origin from revelation; but modern theology would have us believe that the Mosaic cosmogony is only the Hebrew form of the myth, and is most unhistoric.

To discuss in detail the various adverse criticisms would take more time than we have at our command. For the present it may suffice to say that the objectors are not yet agreed among themselves: and it is self-evident that criticism leading to inconsistent conclusions must be in a very high degree imaginative. But besides the objections from the criticism of the text, we are told that the Mosaic cosmogony is inconsistent with the discoveries of modern science, and therefore, Moses could not have been inspired. This objection is plain and straightforward, and should be met by fair and careful consideration. Too often objections of this character have been met by stating that the purpose of the Scriptures is to teach man religion, not science; to teach what man is unable to find out by his unassisted reason, not physical truths, for the discovery of which he has faculties. This kind of answer can only be regarded as an evasion. For what are we to do when a truth is both religious and scientific, as that contained in our text: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"? And how are we to distinguish between what can be and what can not be discovered by man's natural faculties? Are we to believe that Revelation opens with a scientific misstatement? No! This cannot be. But we

adhere to the plain statement made in the opening words of Genesis as a Divine revelation of the origin of the universe which has neither been superseded by the theories of speculative philosophy nor antiquated by the discoveries of modern science.

The first alleged difficulty in the Mosaic statement is the age of the universe. Geology and astronomy affirm that the existence of heaven and earth must be measured by myriads of thousands of years, whereas, according to Moses, it is alleged they are but of yesterday. But is this a real difficulty? Did Moses indeed say what he is sometimes represented as having said? Does Revelation give this modern date of the origin of all things?

To answer these questions it is of prime importance to know what Moses actually said. What is written? "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." I propose no new interpretation of these words, but simply call your attention to the ancient interpretation of the words "in the beginning," upon which the whole controversy really turns. Observe that the word *Reshith*, the Hebrew for beginning, is without the article. The antiquity and correctness of this reading are supported by the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee versions of the Scriptures. The meaning which is to be attached to the words may plainly be seen from the first verse of St. John's gospel. All divines, English and foreign, agree that St. John in this verse makes a pointed reference to the first words of Genesis: and Dean Alford—a high authority—explains ἐν ἀρχῇ as being equivalent to πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι. By the word *Reshith*, then, it is evident that Moses expressed duration or time, and not order, as Philo thought. The word may mean previous eternity or time, according to the subject spoken of; but there can be no doubt that anterior to a work, and not the first stage of a work, is the meaning which must be assigned to it. What Moses asserts here, then, is this—"Of old, in former duration, God created the heavens and the earth." How long since is not said. It may include millions of myriads of years as easily and truly as thousands, so that Genesis does not state the origin of the heavens and the earth to be a modern one: and if geology and astronomy demonstrate it to be most ancient, there is nothing in the words of Scripture which clashes against the fact. But I have remarked that it is not my intention to give a new interpretation to the words of our text, but simply to revert to an old one. The meaning already given is

no gloss or accommodation to the exigence of the case, but is the interpretation which was given to the passage centuries before the discoveries of geology seemed to demand it. Augustine, Theodoret, and others supposed the first verse of Genesis to describe the creation of matter prior to, and distinct from, the six days' work. Justin Martyr and Gregory Nazianzen believed in an infinitely long period between the creation of matter and the subsequent arrangement of it. It would be easy to quote many authors holding similar opinions; but I will simply give a paragraph from a Bishop of the Church of England who lived nearly 200 years ago. Bishop Patrick, commenting upon the first chapter of Genesis, says: "How long all things continued in mere confusion after the chaos was created, before the light was extracted out of it, we are not told. It might be (for anything that is here revealed) a great while: and all that time the mighty Spirit was making such motions in it as prepared, disposed, and ripened every part of it, for such productions as were to appear successively in such spaces of time as are here and afterwards mentioned by Moses." In like manner it was customary with the Fathers to compare the work of creation with the restoration of man by the work of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Whatever value we may attach to their view as a correct interpretation, it proves beyond a doubt that according to the opinion of the Fathers a period should be placed between the first and second verses of the first chapter of Genesis. This, the ancient, and to my mind the true interpretation, harmonises with, rather than contradicts, the discoveries of modern science, so that physical scientists and divines may unite in affirming the truth of our text: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

II. In the next place, our text is precise as to the Author of Creation. Moses said, "*God* created the heavens and the earth." And notwithstanding the endeavour of some modern scientists to dispose of God from his universe, true science confirms the Divine record on this point, that the present natural phenomena could not have given rise to themselves, but must have had an All wise and Almighty Author. In confirmation of this statement I appeal to the closing words of the famous work on the "Origin of Species." Charles Darwin (who was no mean authority in the scientific world, and a man whom no one will charge with being unduly prejudiced in favour of the Christian theory of creation) thus closes the before-named work: "Authors of the highest eminence seem to be fully satisfied with the view that each species has been independently

created. To my view it accords better with what we know of *the laws impressed on matter by the Creator*, that the production and the extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should be due to secondary causes, like those determining the birth and death of the individual. . . . There is a grandeur in this view of life, with *its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator* into a few forms, or into one: and that, whilst this planet has gone on cycling according to the fixed laws of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved." These words I quote not as agreeing altogether with them, but to show that those who are acknowledged as authorities in the scientific world, and who are by no means biased in favour of Scripture, are bound to confess that the statement of our text is true—that the heavens and the earth had a creator; and that the laws which they observe, and by which they are governed, were devised by His wisdom and imposed upon them by His authority. The laws of nature are not to be personified and placed upon a throne side by side with the Creator. They were not the author of the mighty universe and its wonder, and glory, and beauty, but simply the regulations which God Almighty gave nature to observe. We would therefore alter the famous axiom of Aristotle, "*Deus et natura, nihil faciunt frustra*," to "*Deus nihil facit frustra*," and we believe it would then better harmonise with modern discovery and revealed truth. For what is a law but a rule and plan by which an intelligent being works? Therefore we believe that behind all this beauty and order observable in the natural world; behind all this grand system of law, to investigate which is the duty and business of the scientists, there is a mighty power, a wonderful intelligence, a glorious being, a personal God—manifested indeed in different ways, worshipped under changeable forms, called by various names, but to whose existence every conscience bears witness, and the world of nature offers its testimony; and of whom the Christian in more articulate and definite language can say: "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."

To deny the existence of a personal God and to attribute the origin and present condition of natural phenomena to chance, and to affirm that because everything must have had some form or other it is simply in accordance with a law of nature and the survival of the fittest that the world has

assumed its present form, is most unscientific. It is saying there is thought, but no thinker; design, but no designer; law, but no lawgiver; effect, but no cause! It might as well be said that because metal and mineral must have had some form, it is only in accordance with a law of nature that the fittest should survive in the struggle for existence, that the watch was evolved. Certainly a man who thus reasoned and came to such conclusions would not have credit for being the soundest reasoner, neither would his conclusions be considered the most scientific. But what is the difference, may I ask, between this kind of reasoning and that of many in modern times? In the natural world we see arrangement, subserviency, relation of means to an end, all of which imply intelligence and mind. Design without a designer, order without choice, there cannot be. It may as well be said that a watch, which is nothing but inanimate matter, planned and arranged and produced itself, as that the inanimate matter of which the world is composed, by some "living principle of order within itself," arranged the marvellous system of nature. In the world there is contrivance, and we want a contriver; and until science grants us a contriver, the contrivance is unaccounted for. Has the plant any intelligence by which it contrives the particular organisation of the seed which it yields? Has the hen any power to change the internal constitution of the egg which she lays? She has no power to alter even the colour of a single feather: she cannot foresee, much less determine, the sex of her offspring. Still, there is design, plan, and order in each case. But who is the designer? not the parent. Who? Not chance. Who? The only reasonable answer that can possibly be given is that supplied by our text—God.

It would be impossible to have any greater certainty in reasoning than that by which chance is excluded from the creation of the natural world. The universal experience of mankind is against the idea that the world was produced by any but an intelligent agent. What has chance ever done for us? In the human body it may produce a wen, a wart, a mole, a pimple; but did it ever produce an eye, an ear, a leg, or an arm? In inanimate substances it may produce a clod, or a liquid drop, but did it ever produce a watch or a telescope? In no instance has such a thing ever been produced without intention. And yet we are asked to believe that in nature, "chance," "a fortuitous concourse of atoms," "a principle of order originally in matter," has produced marvels infinitely surpassing any of these. Can this be maintained without monstrous absurdity? Yet

this is Atheism! Effect, but no cause! Design, but no designer! Thought, but no thinker! A world, but no maker!

But there are those who, abandoning the theory of resolving all things into chance, would reply to the question, "What was the origin of the present natural phenomena?" by saying that every organised body which we see, every plant and every animal, are only so many out of the possible varieties and combinations of beings which the lapse of infinite ages has brought into existence. That the present world is only a relic out of many previous systems of nature. In the first place we reply to this that it is contrary to experience. No such experiments are now going on; no such energy operates now as that which is here supposed; no such new species are now coming into existence, nor are there any such new varieties as would support this opinion. Upon this supposition we might expect to see unicorns and mermaids; or, if this were impossible, why may we not expect to find nations without nails upon their fingers, races of men without noses, or with only one eye, or one ear? If these ever existed, what reason can be given for their discontinuance?

We must also object to the theory which alleges that the parts were not intended for the use, but that the use arose because the thing was adapted for it—*i. e.*, that the eye and the ear were not respectively constructed for seeing and hearing, but that men use these members for this purpose because they discovered that they were adapted for it. In answer to this statement we must affirm that the marks of design and adaptation to these purposes are so palpable in the construction of the organs, that it amounts to demonstrative proof that the Author of Nature had this in view when he formed the part. We believe, therefore, that the eye was made for seeing, and the ear for hearing; and that when they were made their Designer had this object in view in their formation.

We must also demur to the theory which asserts that the organ arose from "perpetuated endeavour." Did anyone ever hear of the desire to fly developing a wing; or the wish to see creating an eye? Besides, in many instances the effort is all against the part, so that the organ has to overcome a constant resistance, might be demonstrated did time permit; but all must be familiar with examples. The reason revolts against such sophistry, that "a principle of order inherent in matter" or "perpetual endeavour," a "desire," could ever give rise to the glorious system and wonderful arrangement we see around us. Where order is wanted, there

we find it, where it is not required, there it is not found. We are unable to look around us, or as a Christian philosopher has well said, "even to raise a hand to our head," without having sufficient evidence to convince us that there is a God, and we believe that that God is the creator of the heavens and the earth.

III. We are to notice in the third place the work which it is here asserted God did. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Thus comprehensive as to the time, and definite as to the author, the text is also precise as to the fact of creation. There are three words used in the Old Testament in reference to the production of the world. Barà he created, Yatozár he formed, Asáh he made: and this difference is to be observed between them. The first is used only in reference to the work of God, while the two latter may denote the work of man. We may also remark that God alone is caled Boré, Creator. Therefore, whether the word creation etymologically means to make something out of nothing or not, we may assert without fear of contradiction, that according to the *usus loquendi* of the Hebrews, it denoted a Divine act, something which could be performed by God alone. And if we compare the commentary which the Psalms furnish upon the word, we shall see that there is much reason for believing that creation means to make something out of nothing. "He spake, and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast." The link between the Divine Will and the realization is not revealed, and if it were, perhaps, it would be impossible for finite minds to understand it. Nevertheless, the word creation is not merely a name for our ignorance of the mode in which the universe was produced. It teaches us that neither the universe nor the matter of which it is composed is eternal or self existent, but the work of the Divine Will and power. And this doctrine of the first sentence of Holy Writ is in accordance with all sound reason; neither has it been shaken by any of the facts brought to light by the discoveries of modern science. Even supposing the nebulous theory to be true, and the starry hosts to be mere agglomerations of fiery matter, endowed with self-evolving power according to fixed laws—if we grant this there must have been a maker of that matter; there must have been a lawgiver who fixed those laws, and so the assertion in our text must be true: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

In order fully to understand the meaning of Moses it is necessary further to notice the words "heaven and earth." Some would say this sentence is

merely a heading of the whole chapter; but the word "and," which joins this verse on to the next, clearly shows that our text is a part of the narrative. Besides, if this is not so, we have no account of the creation of the earth. Others would affirm that the first verse simply states the materials out of which the heavens and the earth were created, but this is to put into the verse that which it does not contain, which is most unsound exegesis. The words "heavens and earth" in no other passage of Scripture mean the materials out of which the universe was created.

"Heaven and earth" in Scripture is a standing formula denoting all things; therefore, the words "the heavens and the earth" comprehend all created things above and below, visible and invisible, material and spiritual. Our text, then, properly understood, teaches that of old, in former times, in the measureless ages of eternity, the Almighty, by His mimite power and wisdom, called into being all things that exist, whether it be the seraph before the throne, or those dazzling orbs of heaven which whirl through space with measureless rapidity, whose existence must be numbered by myriads of years; or the worm which takes up its abode beneath the surface of the ground, or the insect whose brief life is spanned by a single moment. All things were made by Him and for Him, and all things serve Him who is their Maker and Preserver. This is the grand truth stated simply and sublimely in this short sentence on the opening page of Revelation, and this is the truth which all true and trustworthy scientific inquiry confirms.

Hitherto, then, we have seen that the Bible, instead of contradicting science, is a remarkable anticipation of what geology and astronomy have discovered. According to the Scripture record, this earth is not the centre of the universe, but long before it was fashioned for man there were regions more glorious than the earth, heavens more ancient than the firmament, and heavenly inhabitants that excel in strength. The Bible presents us with a view of the earth before man inhabited it, covered with water and utterly void of life. Very similar to this are the statements of geology, which seems now to prove, not only that by far the greatest part of the earth has been under water, but that to water it owes its origin, and that under water the entire gradual formation of these mighty masses took place.

Time forbids me now entering upon the question of the different periods or stages of the creation. On each of these points I believe Scripture

and science to be in perfect harmony. Both nature and Scripture teach us that God works gradually. Neither the difficulty of producing the world in a single day, nor the delay in occupying six days to do the work, can be said to be too hard for the Omnipotent. The objections as to the immovability of the earth, the nature of the firmament, and the creation of one human pair, which have been brought forward by spurious criticism, are only apparent, and vanish away before the light of fair investigation. So that a comparison of the actual statements of Moses with the discovered facts of modern science is so far from shaking our faith in the accuracy of the sacred narrative, that it rather confirms it.

We are astonished to see how the Hebrew prophet in his rapid sketch of the formation of the earth written some 4,000 years ago has anticipated some of the most wonderful discoveries of the present age, and we can only attribute his power of doing so to inspiration. Moses informs us that the earth was created a limitless period before the advent of man; and geology has recently discovered a long pre human period. Scripture shows that the "heavens" of our text include the abodes of angels and fixed stars, and astronomy has discovered remote worlds whose light began its journey long before the existence of man. Moses declares the earth was covered by a deep, and became void and formless: geology by investigation has discovered that the globe was once covered by a uniform ocean. And so one might proceed to great length, and show that at each stage, step by step, science has not cast suspicion upon Revelation, nor proved it to be untrustworthy, but has demonstrated its truthfulness, and confirmed its accuracy in each particular, and so has set to its seal that God is true, and that His Word is the truth.

Science, reason, and Revelation, then, all affirm that there is a great First Cause, Omniscient, Omnipotent, and All merciful, and without this admission the mighty superstructure of modern physical science must wax into the baseless fabric of a vision. God has stamped upon the works of nature evidence of his own being and goodness. Mind, design, plan, contrivance, meet us everywhere, and the impartial reasoner cannot be satisfied without an intelligent being to correspond. Lord Bacon long ago remarked that "it is truly said, if it be rightly understood, that *opus naturæ est opus intelligentiæ*, the wise author of nature has so excellently contrived the universe, that the more clearly and particularly we discern how congruously the means are to the end to be obtained by them, the more

plainly we discern the admirable wisdom of the omniscient author of all things."

There are mysteries, my brethren, in nature which we cannot understand, though our inquiries be conducted on sure grounds. There are limits to the advances of the human understanding, beyond which we cannot pass without entering into the presence of the Infinite and Inscrutable. A veil is spread before our sense, behind which our reason assures us that the Omnipotent Hand must work, although He withdraws Himself from our immediate perception. God is about our path, our eyes only need to be opened, and we should see Him.

Thou who has given me eyes to see
And love this world so fair,
Give me a heart to find out Thee
And read Thee Everywhere.

Finally, I would ask, Why should the enlightened Christian, who has a correct idea of the firm foundation upon which Revelation is built, be afraid of any of the discoveries of science? Is not the God of Revelation the God of Nature also? Has Christianity lost anything from the discoveries of science in the past? It is unmanly to blink the approach of light from whatever quarter it may fall upon us, and they are not the best friends of Christianity who fear the torch of science or the torch of history being held to the Bible. I have no fear that the discoveries of science will ever militate against the disclosures of Scripture, but am persuaded whatever new heights science may scale, whatever depths she may explore, she shall bring nothing from her daring and successful labours which will not, when rightly understood, pay a fresh tribute to the testimony of Revelation. The infidel may watch her with eagerness, but the Christian may calmly attend her, assured she can never find anything which will not harmonise with the revealed Word of God. Let the investigation be sufficient, let the induction be honest, let observation take its farthest flight, let experiment penetrate into the very recesses of nature, still Christianity is secure. True science will always pay homage to the Creator of the Universe, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things: and both science and Scripture with one harmonious and mighty voice shall continue to proclaim, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

DIVES AND LAZARUS.

By the REV. ANGUS MACKAY, B.A.

Preached in St. James's Episcopal Church, Aberdeen.

ST. LUKE, XVI. 26.

"Beside all this, between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

"BETWEEN us and you there is a great gulf fixed." So might Dives have said to Lazarus in the days of his vanished splendour. For what deeper gulf is there than that which yawns between luxury and poverty? What more impassable barriers are there than those erected by caste and prejudice and pride between the widely separated extremes of social life. This social gulf, as it existed in His own time, Christ has vividly depicted for us in the parable from which our text is taken. First He paints for us Dives, probably a sleek courtier of Herod, grown enormously wealthy by some unjust monopoly granted to him by the royal tyrant: or some Tyrian merchant whose ships touched at every port and exchanged the famous Tyrian dye for all the treasures and luxuries of the world. Dives probably lived in a dwelling which was in all but in name a palace. If we would picture to ourselves his home we cannot be far wrong in conjuring up before us one of the more sumptuous dwellings of the East in those days. Its walls would be of marble, wainscotted within with ivory or alabaster. It would enclose courtyards shaded with costly awnings and cooled by plashing fountains. Bright coloured hangings would make gay its interior: while every article which use could demand or luxury create would adorn its lofty chambers. His manner of life, too, Christ vividly depicts for us in two words. The words which are translated in the Authorised Version "faring sumptuously every day" may more literally be rendered "living daily in mirth and splendour." Dives then lived in mirth and splendour: every dainty that could stimulate the palate, every instrument of music

that could ravish the ear, every glittering bauble that could delight the eye was to be found at his frequent banquets. Those who passed that stately mansion after sunset would gaze with envy at the windows whence light and laughter and music streamed into the night. And the rich man's personal adornments were in keeping with his other surroundings, for Christ describes even these. Christ, I think, did not love luxury or effeminacy. You will remember how, when speaking of the stern and heroic Baptist, He said: "What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment?" and then added with a touch of scorn, "Behold those who are gorgeously apparelled and live delicately are in kings' courts." (Luke vii. 25.) I can imagine a similar tone of scorn in the Master's voice as he described how this rich man was clothed in the Tyrian purple, which only nobles and great men might wear, and in "fine linen" representing a fabric which in those days was worth twice its weight in gold. Such was Dives, in the eyes of his fellows most enviable and prosperous, but in the eyes of God the most miserable and pitiable of all the sons of men.

And now let us turn to Lazarus. What a contrast! And yet a contrast which can be paralleled in any of our great towns this very minute. Who that has a mind to think and a heart to feel can fail to be moved at such inequalities! Lazarus was a beggar. But remember a beggar then was not the same thing as a beggar now. Then there were no Poor Laws, no hospitals, no charitable institutions of any kind. It was quite possible for a man to be honest, industrious, self respecting—and yet when sickness or misfortune came upon him there was no other alternative but beggary or starvation. Lazarus was a beggar, and not only that, but so helpless with disease that he could not walk; he had to be carried by others and laid at the rich man's gate. And the depths of his degradation is shown by this, he had no human sympathisers, but the dogs came and licked the sores. Dogs in the East, remember, are not the friends and companions of men, they are pariahs driven out of the city by day who return at day and prowl about the lanes in search of refuse and garbage. Lazarus and these dogs were companions in misfortune, and were looked upon by men as about on the same level: both lived on what they could pick up in the street, both inspired disgust, both were pariahs and outcasts. No picture of degradation and misery could be completer than that depicted in these words "moreover the dogs came and licked his sores."

Thus was it with these two men in their lifetime. Thus it continued to be, as the world judges, to the very last. Death at length put an end to the sufferings of Lazarus and the passers by no longer saw with glances of disgust or pity the familiar figure of the beggar at the rich man's gate. In course of time the rich man also died, and I have no doubt had a royal funeral. I dare say his splendid entertainments were much missed by his richer neighbours. I dare say they both regretted him and praised him for, as the psalmist acutely says, "So long as thou doest well unto thyself men will speak good of thee." (Psalm xlix. 18.) Thus pomp and grandeur followed Dives into the shadowy realm of death, and neglect and misery were the attendants of Lazarus to the last. But let us take a step farther and what a sudden and awful reversal takes place in the fate of these two men. Lazarus woke to consciousness in Abraham's bosom, that is, in bliss: the rich man lifted up his eyes only to find that he was in torments. He asked that Lazarus might be sent to dip his finger in water and cool his tongue, and he was told that it was impossible. He asked that he might be permitted to warn his brethren, and learnt that it was too late even for him to do good. Now God forbid that we should exaggerate the awful picture here presented to us. Granted that the hell here spoken of is not the place of the finally impenitent, but the place where departed spirits await the judgment, and therefore not necessarily eternal. Granted that the flame here spoken of is no more to be taken away literally than Abraham's bosom is to be taken literally. Granted that the parable represents Dives as still retaining some traces of goodness, since he loves his brethren, and that, therefore, his case cannot have been utterly hopeless. But when all this has been allowed, can that have been anything but awful which Christ depicts in such awful language? Can we deny that the sufferings which Lazarus endured in this world, were as nothing compared with the sufferings which Dives brought upon himself in the world beyond the grave? And if it be so let us pause and consider what was the crime of Dives, that we may avoid his terrible fate.

What was the sin of Dives? Not that he lived in mirth and splendour, but that he allowed the sounds of mirth to drown the moan of the world's misery, and the splendour to dazzle his eyes from beholding the evils of which society is full. Not that he was clad in purple and fine linen, but that he suffered the luxuries by which he was surrounded to lull him into complacent ease careless of other's needs. "In the thought of him that

is at ease there is contempt for misfortune," says Job. (Job xii. 5.) How fundamentally true of human nature is that? Dives was guilty of this contempt. He was not, I think, a positively cruel man. Do you suppose Lazarus was a nice object to have there lying at his gate—a beggar, clothed in rags, and full of loathsome sores? Yet it is evident that he allowed him to be placed there, and to profit by his neighbourhood to so much luxury. At least, he did not interfere with the servants who gave him the crumbs and broken bread swept from his bountcous table. Yes, but although not positively cruel he was indifferent. He did not recognise the claims of that man's brotherhood. He said practically to the beggar by that proud and supercilious demeanour with which he passed him by, "Between us and *you* there is a great gulf fixed." His sin was that he neglected to do anything to close that gulf or to bridge it over with the golden bridge of love. It was not what he had done, but what he had left undone that ruined Dives. It was that he never sought to lessen the distance between luxury and poverty, that he never stooped in sympathy, never took the beggar's hand, or listened in compassion to the beggar's tale of woe. It was that he held personal ministrations were not to be thought of in such a case. It was, in fact, that he acquiesced in the yawning abyss which separated them and accepted the world's code in such matters. He could not and would not be on the same side of the gulf as pauper Lazarus. And mark the result, brethren, *on the same side of the gulf he never was!* In the other world the gulf was there still, as fixed as ever; but, alas for Dives, *he and Lazarus had changed sides*. It was part of the system of Divine reprisals. For if anyone had gone to the rich man during his lifetime, and had besought him to close the gulf, and to show personal sympathy and kindness to the beggar, what would he have replied? He would replied as *we* are so apt to do. He would have called it impracticable and impossible. He would have said there must always be some abjectly poor, and it was even better that it should be so. He would have said, "I and Lazarus are so widely separated by birth, by education, by habits, that we are almost different creatures. I cannot have friendship and sympathy with such as he." Cannot? Alas, for Dives! As he has pronounced it, so it must be. That word "cannot" still intervenes betwixt him and Lazarus, but it is heard from the other side of the gulf now. "They that would pass from us to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

Brethren, *this parable is a danger signal to warn us.* It says to each one of us: "Take care! What you are to others, God is to you: as you deal with others, God will deal with you." Would you know how you stand as regards God? See how you stand as regards your fellow men. Many hundreds of years before Christ, David wrote: "With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful, with the perfect man Thou wilt show Thyself perfect, with the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure, and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward." (Psalm xviii. 25.) And this is the very essence of Christ's Gospel. Do you need gifts daily from the hands of God? "Give and it shall be given you, good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over." (Luke vi. 38.) Do you need mercy? Vainly shall you seek it unless you practise it; it is only the merciful who shall obtain mercy. Do you need daily forgiveness for sins without number daily committed? "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." (Luke vi. 37); but "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespass." (Matt. vi. 15.) Or do you look forward with awe and fear to the Day of Judgment, knowing full well your ill deserts? "Judge not and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned." (Luke vi. 57.) It is thus God governs the world. This it is which makes religion so intensely practical a thing. Daily, hourly, we are engaged in pronouncing sentence upon ourselves. Our treatment of our fellows fixes and decides God's treatment of us. So if we would avoid this rich man's terrible fate, let us beware of pride. So surely as we treat with supercilious neglect any human creature, so surely as we seek to look down upon them or to keep them at a distance, so surely do we put an impassable gulf betwixt ourselves and God. For it is written: "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but as for the proud He beholdeth them afar off." (Psalms cxxxviii. 6.) All heaven and hell are summed up in this saying: "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. vii. 2.)

And, secondly, *this Parable is a way-post to guide us.* It points out a very different path to happiness from that to which the voices of ambition and pleasure invite us. It is a commentary upon those two mysterious sayings: "Blessed are ye poor." (Luke vi. 20), and "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." (Mark x. 23.) It teaches us that we are stewards, not owners, of this world's goods; that our watch-word must be service, not privilege; that wealth is given not to lavish

upon self, but to expend for the good of others. It says to us: "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends . . . nor thy rich neighbours, but call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind . . . for they cannot recompense thee." (Luke xiv. 12, &c.) It tells us not to waste all our sympathy and friendship, as Dives did, upon our equals and our fellows, but to keep some of it for the misery which lies at our gates.

Brethren, there are two classes in this world, the gay and the sad, the prosperous and the outcast, the favourites of fortune and the children of indigence and misery and sin. For which of these classes will you declare yourself, to which shall your warmest sympathy, your readiest help be given? We know on which side *Christ* declared Himself. He came to range Himself with the sad, as a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; with the outcast as one despised and rejected of men; with the indigent as He who had not where to lay His head; with the sinful as one numbered with the transgressors, and taunted as a friend of publicans and sinners. In your daily walk with which will *you* sympathise, for which will *you* work?

I know how much more difficult it is to be wisely charitable now than it was under the conditions to which this parable refers. I know how the problem is complicated by the utter worthlessness of the mendicant class, by the danger of destroying self-respect even when our alms are given to the worthy, and by the very magnitude of the evil appalling us by its vastness and paralysing us with a sense of our impotence to grapple with it. But I know also that Christ will excuse no man from this warfare. I know He has used His strongest denunciations against those who from sloth, or cowardice, or self-love, decline the conflict. I know that He will give to those that ask, the tact, the prudence, and the patience which are our best weapons in this contest. It will avail us nothing hereafter to plead the difficulties of our task, or to exclaim, "Lord, I knew Thee that Thou art an austere man." The parable points out our duty. It is for us to do it.

But are we doing it? Have we tried to fill up the gulf which still yawns betwixt Dives and Lazarus? Have we cast one stone into its chasms? Or, have we, like Dives, been content to say, "They which would pass from us to you cannot." Or worse still, have we mocked at all such teaching as this and called it impracticable. Remember, it was

such derision that originally called forth the story of Dives and Lazarus. Christ had said, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," and then we read "The Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided Him." (Luke xvi. 14.) Shall we, who have heard the parable, deride still? Far, far short of our duty in this respect must the best of us fall: the bright ideal Christ holds up to us seems often inaccessible as a star. But at least let us avoid the indifference of Dives, lest we share also his condemnation.

Does anyone here say he is not a wealthy man, and that therefore the parable does not apply to him? Or does anyone say he has nothing to give? What, not even the widow's mite? Not even the cup of cold water? Not even a word of sympathy? Is there nothing you can do, nothing you can give up by which the inequalities of life may be made less glaring, its miseries less poignant, its sinfulness less heinous? If not, you are no disciple of Christ. For remember love, and love only, is religion in its essence. On the last great day if we are placed on Christ's left hand instead of His right; if His word to us is "Depart ye cursed" and not "Come ye blessed"; if instead of basking in the sunshine of His love we wither beneath His frown, it will be not necessarily because we have rejected any creed or any system of theology. It will be because the Judge shall say to us, "I was an hungered and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took Me not in: naked and ye clothed Me not; sick and in prison and ye visited Me not." (Matt. xxv. 42.) We shall learn to our infinite surprise and confusion, that the beggar who lay at our gate is the Judge who is judging us, and that in neglecting Lazarus we neglected Christ.

NATIONAL IDOLATRY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. W. C. MAGEE,

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Preached in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall.

EXODUS XXXII. 1.

"The people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up! make us gods which shall go before us; for as for this Moses—the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt—we wot not what is become of him."

We are in the habit of speaking of Jewish history as sacred history, and of all other history as profane history. Now, this expression conveys either a very great error or a very great truth, according to the meaning which we attach to these words. If, when we say that the history of the Jews was sacred history, we by that mean that it alone was sacred, and that all other nations were, according to the strict meaning of the word, profane—outside of the temple—outside of the Father's house—that God was God only of the Jews and not of all other nations also, then we are expressing a most dangerous falsehood. God is the king of all kings and lord of all lords. There is no nation—there never has been any form or domain of Old Testament life—of which God has not in truth been king. God is as truly in London as He was ever in Jerusalem; and, in this sense of this word, the history of England is as truly a sacred history as was the history of the Jews. That is to say, it is the history of a people that has been ruled by God's laws, corrected by God's judgments, working out God's designs. The notion that nations have nothing to do with God is a very modern and a very evil heresy. All our life—all our national life—springing, as it does, out of that family likeness of which God is assuredly the author—all our history—is, in this sense of the word, sacred history. But if by "sacred history" we mean history in which the presence of God is not more real, but more visible, than in all other history—history in which we can

more easily and more certainly discern the very moment of God's presence and the very manner of His acting, then in this sense, undoubtedly, Jewish history may be called sacred history—more sacred than any other, as it seems to bring us, as we study it more directly and closely, near to God Himself. In the temple the holy of holies was so called because there there was a special manifestation of the divine presence; and yet, surely, the court of the Gentiles that girt it round about, and was in the same temple, was also a holy place.

But in this sense, brethren, the sacred history of the Jew has for us the deepest possible interest if we remember that our history is also sacred, because then the divine presence, as we trace it in Jewish history, becomes for us at once the pledge and the type of the divine presence amongst us now. As truly as God was then ruling the nation of the Jews, so truly is He ruling our nation and all other nations; and if we would trace the manner of His ruling we must look for it there. It is just as it is with the story of miracles. Most of the miracles of which we read in the Bible are, after all, only abridgments of the processes of God in the kingdom of nature. When our Lord turned the water into wine, He was but intensifying and abridging, as it were, that natural process by which the streams upon a thousand hills are gathered year after year and converted into the blood of the grape. Or, again, when He fed the five thousand with the multiplied loaves, He was but intensifying that natural process by which the grain that ripens upon a thousand plains is multiplied by the divine power, and converted into bread to satisfy the need of man. And so, with respect to Jewish history, we see there, as it were, condensed, intensified, and so made sharply and clearly visible, one of those slow processes of divine government and judgment which, in other nations, rolled themselves out through the length of centuries; and, therefore, it is all-important for us to study the manifestations of God's government, and God's relations to man, and man's dealings with God, as we find them unerringly traced for us in the Jewish history.

Now, I would ask you to-day to consider with me one such feature of the dealings between God and man in history as it is given us in our text; and, in doing so, I would ask you to endeavour, with me, to strip this scene of all that is, as it were, accidental and exceptional in it, and to find in it, if we can, those deep, underlying, and abiding principles

of God's government of men that may be at work amongst ourselves at this moment.

Now, when we turn to the history of the Jews as it is described in this chapter, we find that it is really the history of a most remarkable religious revolution occurring in the nation of the Jews. In the 31st chapter you will find that the people are setting about the building of the tabernacle in which they are to worship the one true God, whose prophet they acknowledged Moses to be. In the 33d chapter we find them once more acknowledging the authority of God and of Moses; but in the 32d chapter we find them completely casting off the authority of both. The people, impatient at the absence of Moses, gather around Aaron and bid him make Gods for them, for as for this Moses, they wist not what had become of him; and Aaron, yielding to their entreaty, makes them a god; and then comes the outbreak of national licentiousness described in the 6th verse—"And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play;" and then comes the national judgment of fratricidal strife and murder. They fell every man by the hand of his brother. National apostasy, national licentiousness, national strife and misery—this is the great drama in three acts that is set before us here. The accidents of it are its suddenness, such as might naturally occur in all barbarous or semi-barbarous nations—one of those strange and sudden fluctuations of feeling that occur at such a stage in the history of a nation, and not afterward; and, again, that mount that burned with fire and was blackened with cloud in the distance. These are not of the essence of the scene, but the essence of the scene lies in this—that you have a nation rejecting God and His law—that you have that nation immediately plunged into the wildest and foulest licentiousness, and then that you have that nation judged and chastened by a sore and a bloody judgment. And now let us trace, for our own guidance, each one of those acts in this finely recorded drama that we may profit thereby for ourselves.

And, in the first place, we find here an instance of national corruption and ultimate rejection of the true faith. Now, let us ask, in the first place, from what source this sprang—who were the movers in this great act of national apostasy? There appeared in it the priest and the people. Yes, but who moves the priest to this work of apostasy and deception? Who set the priest to devise this false religion? The peo

ple. Aaron puts out all his skill at their bidding. You have a distinctly marked case of priestcraft in its very worst form. But who are the inciters of that priestcraft? Not the priests, but the people. Yes, brethren, here are true history and true philosophy—both. There is a falser and a shallower view of philosophy that pictures over the priest, out of his own consciousness, evolving some new religion which, by his cunning and craft, he contrives to impose upon the people, keeping them in ignorance that he may reap from their religion for his own gain; and such a theory is often enough cast in the teeth of us priests at this day. But those who speak thus are but shallow philosophers and smatterers in history. Never yet in the history of the world were the priesthood such a caste—so separate in the nation—as that they invented their belief and then imposed it on the nation. The men who say this forget that the priest is, after all, a man of the people—sprung from the people—having learnt the traditions of the people—having sympathies with the people—having imbibed the antipathies of the people long before he became a priest, and that the false doctrine that he teaches he learnt in the family and has had strengthened in his intercourse with the nation. These superstitions—these false religions—are not carefully cultivated exotics that the priests bring from their gardens to plant abroad: they are the weeds that spring up naturally in the rank soil of a people's heart, and they are of the people and redolent of their ways. It is not so often the priests who deceive the people as it is the people that will have the priest to deceive them so. "The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule in their name, and my people love to have it so, and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Yes, brethren, it is this multitude—it is this imperious multitude—this eager, seeking multitude, craving for novelty, which imposes upon the priest and the teacher the duty of pleasing them.

Do we hear nothing like this from the multitude and the people now? Is it not rung in our ears in all our modern literature? "You priests, what have you to teach us? Your Lord that you speak of we wist not what has become of Him. Give us less of your dogma: imbibe the spirit of the age: learn of the multitude. Make us gods that shall go before us, for as for this Moses—as for this Christ—we wist not what is become of them." Woe to us if we listen to any such entreaty. High above the priest and people stands the mount of the law of the Lord.

So far as we bear this law faithfully and honestly in our hands have we the right to teach you; and, just that we may not seek to please you when you command us to please you, God has given us this abiding—this unimpassioned—this unmixed and secure revelation of His will, that you may judge us by it, and that we may judge you, and that you may escape the real danger of a priesthood or a prophet race that accommodate their teaching to the taste of the day, and strive to catch the spirit of the age.

Priestcraft, then, sprung from the people—this is the first lesson that we learn from this incident.

But then, in the next place, what was the real cause of this impatience of the people with their old faith? It was this: "As for this Moses, we wist not what has become of him." Their teacher had become invisible. They needed something that they could see, and touch, and handle, and these were to be their gods. They could not "endure as seeing the invisible." And this, brethren, is the temptation of the human heart and will at all times, in all ages. Man's heart craves to see its God; and the answer to that craving—to the cry of humanity, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,"—God's answer to that has been the incarnation of Jesus Christ; and to the soul of man that desires to see God there has been revealed "God manifest in the flesh." But then He, too, has passed away from earth, for He has told us that it is not good for us that He should be always with us. The reason of this is that we may learn to have faith in the invisible. And then the heart of man that seeks always to rest in the visible—that cannot bear the labor and the effort of rising up to the invisible by faith—settles itself ever down to the visible—worships the creature rather than the creator—asks for demonstration when it can only have faith—asks for vision where it should believe in the invisible, and rejects the old faith because it brings no demonstration, and so worships that which it sees because it can not believe in that which it does not see. And so the nation or the soul that gives itself up to this deception clings only to the visible—believes only in what can be demonstrated—worships, loves, cleaves only to that which is close to it, and round about it; and it makes itself gods that may go before it. It takes of its ornaments which the priests took of the Jews. This nation that loses its faith in the invisible takes of its ornaments—of its wealth—of its learning—of its philosophy—of

its art—of its statesmanship—of its military prowess—of its literature—of its poetry : it takes of its ornaments, and it makes for itself new gods, and there comes out ever this calf. There comes out ever some degrading and debasing form of self-worship, for that is the meaning of it all, and the god that the man worships who worships but himself is, after all, but a beast which he worships for a god.

But, in the next place, brethren, observe what follows upon this national apostasy—this worship of the visible. It is very remarkable that immediately upon this there follows gross licentiousness. "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play ;" and, as those who know the original know, this signifies the foulest of those idle heathen orgies, which they had doubtless learnt of old from the Egyptians. "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."

Why is it that licentiousness—that a sensuous and low life—should follow upon an intellectual error in a man's creed? Why is it that idolatry, or the worshipping of many gods, is always accompanied in the history of the world with the grossest sensuality? It hardly appears at first why it should be so ; and yet the reason, if we come to think of it, is very clear. Each idol that men worshipped in the days of the pagan nations, or that they worship now in heathen nations—what is it? It is some portion of nature worshipped, deified—some power in nature—some attribute of man—which the man takes and worships as his god. Now, it is the very nature of all such attributes or properties, if we take them by themselves, that they are monstrous and mischievous. For instance, love without purity is appetite ; wisdom without truthfulness is cunning ; courage without mercy is ferocity ; justice without compassion is horrible cruelty. So on, take each separate attribute of man, give it some idol form, and worship it, and it becomes a monster, and those who worship it become like unto it, and it is only as men recognize that there is one supreme, perfect, unseen being, in whom all these differing fragments, as it were, of being and of life are united and harmonized in their true and perfect proportions—that is to say, it is only as men rise up above the worship of these idols of the lower world to that one perfect being in whom all these attributes are perfectly united and harmonized—it is only in that degree that men gain a pure conception of what humanity really should be—a true ideal of their own life

to which they may conform it. And just in the degree in which men lose this idea will they become like unto the things they worship; and that is the reason why idolatrous nations have ever been impure, or cruel, or in some way or other morally defective. Their gods were but fragments of the true God, and each fragment was foul and distorted, and made its worshippers like to itself.

And so, brethren, it comes to pass for each one of us in our own life or in our national life. If we take any model or ideal of life lower than the highest and the truest—if we take, as it were, any fragment of our own nature to worship and give ourselves to it, then it becomes to us a false and degraded and debasing worship. Then the idol, be it what it may that we worship, degrades our souls and makes us base and sensual—lowers our ideal of life—degrades us down to the things we see, and in the midst of which we live. So for us, as for the Jew of old, there is needed—is there not?—this warning, "Keep yourselves from idols." For from the worship of the idol, be the idol what it may, comes the degraded and the debased and the sensuous life of the worshipper. Hence then, brethren, let us see to it well that we Englishmen of this nineteenth century worship no idols, lest the idol-worship bring with it now, as it brought of old, the licentious and the degraded life.

Are there no idols of the day that we are in danger of worshipping now in the midst of us? Is there not the idol of that very multitude that were so clamorous for wrong toward their teachers—the idol of that public opinion which men tell us that we should more and more worship and bow down to—public opinion, the voice of the multitude, which they tell us is the voice of God. No greater lie—no viler blasphemy was ever uttered than this, that ascribes to the wild, capricious, ignorant, hasty, passionate utterances of the people, the attribute of divinity. Public opinion—the voice of the multitude—to be the rule of a man that has a reason and a conscience, and believes that he is one day to be judged! Public opinion that says, "Let us worship this calf!" Public opinion that said of Christ, "Not this man but Barabbas." Public opinion? What is the duty of the statesman, or the teacher, or the individual man, as regards public opinion? To create it, if he can—to mould it—to instruct it—to resist it—to endure it, but never, never, as he has a soul and a conscience, and as he believes in a

day of judgment, never to make it the rule of life—never to justify one word or deed that he does not believe to be true and right in itself, because he was bound to bow to public opinion.

And then, brethren, another idol of the day, surely, is the temptation to follow party—to make party a god. Has it not been a great danger in our own day, and an increasing one, that the very idolatry of party has grown so strong that it is held to be almost an immoral thing in any English statesman to vote or speak against his party although he votes and speaks with his conscience? Is there no danger for those who have to guide the nation through the hour of peril that they make this their god that should go before them?

And then see the tyranny of fashion—the rule of the set or the society that we live in—the tone of our set—the talk of our club. How many a soul that should have known more of bravery and more of manhood has bowed itself like a slave to the fashion of the hour.

And then there is the coarser and lower idolatry of self—the mere sensuousness that seeks to lead a pleasant and luxurious life and forget the death that comes to all, and the sorrow that may come to many, and the need and the distress that lie all round about us—the sensuousness and selfishness of society that seeks to shut out from its gilded saloons all care and sorrow, and to make life, as far as it can, a perpetual feast, with no eye to see the hand that may be writing on the wall "*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin,*" at their feast.

And, again, there is the grosser and lower sensualism that still more coarsely imitates this [illegible]—the selfish indulgence—the intemperance—of the multitude, the effect of which is that every rise of wages in our country, as we have lately learning, seems to be followed by a wave of intemperance that drowns the souls of men. Is it not true, brethren, that whether the idol be of clay or of gold—whether it be artistically or coarsely fashioned—whether it be the idol of the upper class or the idol of the lower—we are in grievous danger of going every man after his idol, and that then there shall come to pass, in the midst of a society that has forgotten its old self-denying manhood and its purifying reverence and its fear of God and its acknowledgment of the invisible and the divine law, a mere living for the moment—a mere desire to have, if it must be a short life, at least a merry one, or that the people shall sit down to eat and drink and shall rise up to play? Oh,

may God deliver us, one and all, teachers and taught, preachers and people, from the idols of the age!

And then what follows upon such sensuous idol worship as this? What follows? Why we read in the last act of this drama that there comes fratricide. It is one of the incidents of the story that those who slay are specially commissioned to slay, but it is of the essence of the story that licentious and degraded and selfish life is ever in the history of mankind cleansed with fire and with blood, and the reason is a very simple one. Teach men that in this world they are to live only for themselves; teach men that there is no world beyond the grave—no heaven to console the poor—no judgment to await the unjust—and then, if men have but the few passing hours of this life, and after that nothing, is it not clear that each man will and must snatch and grasp at all the visible enjoyment that this life can give him?—for that is his only chance. He passes then into annihilation. If he has not enjoyment now he never has it; and just as the old picture of life was that of the bird that passed from the cold into the lighted and heated and joyous chamber, and passed away again unseen in that swift sudden passage, surely men will revel in the light and mingle round the fire and seek to gather their full share of the feast. Yes, but then the feast is not large enough for all. The tables are not sufficiently spread; and there is no room at the banquet for the needier and the fiercer brother; and then those that you have taught that there is no hereafter to wait patiently and hope for—those that shall have been deprived of the consolations of faith in a heaven yet to come, with its joys and its glories—those whom you have told that there is nothing but this world to live and to care for, and that that feast which is spread here is all that you and they can have and that you and they can share—will not be slow in telling you, "You must give us our full share of this feast. You have feasted long enough: rise up that we may take your place." And then what comes? Then there comes that last fratricidal strife that has been seen in Europe more than once, and may be seen again, unless God, in His mercy, avert it by the revival of the old faith that kept together society in the bonds of a divine brotherhood. There is to be seen the cold and stern and resolute selfishness of the rich fighting for its very dear life against the passionate and angry selfishness of the poor; and then comes that strife which tears society into pieces: then comes

that uprising, lawless anarchy that makes the nightmare of many a statesman and causes the dread of many a comfortable citizen, when religion, that they have attempted to banish from the world, has no longer its lessons of a divine fatherhood or of a divine brotherhood. And then the hand of every man is against his fellow, and they perish each man by the sword of his brother.

Yes, there are not wanting signs in the world—there are not wanting signs in our own country, although they are not yet so loud or so noisy as to compel the attention of all men—there are not wanting signs that a godless nation, or a degraded and a debased one, has to dread at last that cleansing fire and sword that are the avenging judgments of God upon the nation that has cast off His faith and that has denied His law.

And so, brethren, we learn, surely, from this story of sacred history long ago that there is, in the midst of us, still the same justice of divine providence. We learn—and all human history has been teaching us from that day to this—that this terrible drama re-enacts itself with infallible certainty in each of its acts—that, when the nation begins by casting off its faith and ceasing to believe in the invisible, it degrades itself in the sensuous worship and enjoyment of the visible, and that then there is no check for all those underground fires and forces which threaten even to work their way up and to destroy society—that there is no check for this but brute force ; and then the question is woe for the weakest and well for the strongest. And so ever does the false faith lead to the foul life, and ever is the foul life cleansed by the terrible judgments of God.

My brethren, in these days when men, in the name of free thought, defy authority, and in the name of philosophy reject the older philosophy, and the deeper and the truer teachings that they can find in their Bibles—in these days when we priests and prophets are invited, not in wrath at men's sins, but in very feebleness and helplessness to let fall the tables of the law and see them broken at our feet—in these days when the cry is still, "As for these stories of the divine law, and as for this story of a divine and incarnate teacher and mediator, we wist not what has become of these : give these up and go with us, and we will give you of these ornaments, and you shall make gods for us, and we shall go together to the banquet that life sets before us," in these days, more than ever, is needed a heart wakeful and near to listen to the

utterances from the mount where, invisible yet surely, there is enthroned the giver of all law—the teacher of all truth. May we, each one of us, lay to heart the lessons that are taught us in this inspired story of how God dealt with the nation of old in the way of teaching and of judgment, for all these things happened to them for our examples. May God give us grace to shun the sin of national idolatry, and so may He preserve us from the suffering of national judgment.

BELIEF AND REASON.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. MOOREHOUSE,

BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

Preached in St. John's, Kilburn, on Sunday, May 2, 1886.

ST. LUKE VII, 9.

"When Jesus heard these things He marvelled at him."

We do not often hear, my brethren, that the Lord Jesus was astonished. We read that He had no need "that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." Twice, however, we are told that He was astonished—astonished at unusual and unexpected spiritual phenomenon. On the first occasion, the cause of His astonishment was the obduracy of unbelief. He came to His own city, Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and He spoke there those words of grace which so often proved themselves to be "the power of God unto salvation." At Nazareth, however, they simply gave offence. "Who is this" the people argued "who comes to be a teacher?" Have we not seen him playing in our streets as a child? have we not seen him wielding the axe and saw in his business, the son and helper of an obscure carpenter? and does he suppose that we shall recognise his superiority or acknowledge that there is any thing that we can learn from him?" Our Lord dealt with this impatience with His usual charitableness. He said it was natural that a prophet should not receive honor in his own country, and what was natural, was excusable. So that at first He was lenient to their impatience. But when He saw that their unbelief had power to resist even the evidence of the senses, and to be a bar even to their own bodily benefit, then indeed He was astonished with an amazement not unmixed with sorrow, for "He came unto His own and His own received Him not."

On a second occasion we read that the Lord was astonished—the occasion referred to in our text. He was approached by a man who

had been born a heathen, but who had become what the Jews called "a proselyte of righteousness." We are told that this man's faith excited the wonder of the Son of God, and, therefore, my brethren, every thing that belongs to that faith must be interesting to us. Very deeply interesting, then, is it to learn that already this man was recognized for his devotedness of character. "He is worthy," said the deputation of the Jewish elders who came to present the request, "he is worthy that thou shouldest do this for him, for he loveth our nation, and himself built us our synagogue." He represented that large class of men which has, thank God, its representatives in every age and in every Church—men with whom religion is more than a profession, who love God with all their heart, upon whom the church can rely in her hour of need, upon whom she can call for help with confidence, not merely to assist her with their means and their energy, but also to inspire her selfish and indifferent members by the beauty of their example. Such a man was this centurion. Seeing, then, that this was his character, we may be quite sure that our Lord expected much from him; for, my friends, to a degree which is very rarely realised, the form and meaning of a man's life almost entirely depend upon his realized character. The forms of two men's lives may be altogether different—different in correspondence to the differences of their circumstances and motives, and yet the deep, inner meaning, and the general current of those men's lives may conform to precisely the same type. Suppose, for instance, you know a man, who, as life advances and the shadows of the end are thrown across his path, begins to think thus with himself: 'My time upon earth will soon come to an end. By and by I shall have to pass within the veil, and what kind of store have I laid up for myself in the world to come? Is it not full time I made preparation for another world? I have made the best of this, let me take care to make, if not the best, at least something good of the world to come." He reads God's Word, frequents God's house, and keeps holy God's day, and whenever he is called upon gives liberal contributions, we will suppose, to philanthropic and Christian objects. But, now, my friends, suppose that man does it all, not for the love of God, or love of good, but just that he may win Heaven or escape hell, has that man's character fundamentally changed? Not in the least. He is thinking of self. It is quite true that his life will do less injury to others, nay, that his

example may do not a little good to others; but I am talking about the inner significance of the man's life, and I say that as the moving impulse of all his actions is demonstrably selfishness, as he is thinking what good he can win, or what evil he can avoid, and of nothing else, that man's character, I repeat, is fundamentally unchanged, and the significance of his life not altered. That is why, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the first word is this: "Ye must be born again." Consequent alterations are nothing. Begin at the beginning, or your motives for self will vitiate all the rest.

Well, then, since it is true that character determines conduct, and the Lord Jesus knew that the character of this centurion was that of a devout, unselfish believer in God, we can easily understand that His expectations must have been large. And yet we are told that His expectations were exceeded. Expecting much, He found more; nay, He found so much that He actually said He had "not found so great a faith, no, not in Israel." And let me observe, once more, that it becomes a matter of singular interest to us to learn what were the elements of this man's faith—a faith that astonished the Son of God. Nor do I think that the answer is far to seek, for I think it is clear that the principal elements of his religious life were humility and trustfulness. Some people, indeed, have thought that the humility of this centurion was so extreme as to be exaggerated, and even unnatural. "How," they ask, "can it be possible that a member of a ruling race should have really felt himself unworthy to receive the Lord Jesus into his doors?" Well, I think that a consideration of the character and circumstances of the centurion may easily supply an answer.

You remember he was a Gentile convert; he was a man of a devout temper, of a tender religious conscience, and he had been taught by his Rabbinical masters that this was the position of a Gentile—that he was profane, and unclean with an uncleanness the stain of which could hardly be washed away even by conversion itself. How, then, is it astonishing that a man who had been taught those lessons, and who unfeignedly believed them, should feel himself unworthy to entertain a great prophet of Israel? The wonder is, not that the man felt himself unworthy, but that he recognised that the Lord Jesus was a great prophet. For remember, those who had taught him all which he knew of the covenant religion had not accepted the claims of the Lord

Jesus, while this man, with a religious instinct certain of its object, with one bound passed beyond the faith of his masters.

My brethren, I have very little doubt that the humility of this centurion was founded as well upon moral as upon ceremonial reasons. The noble life, the gracious teaching, the mighty works of the Lord Jesus had filled him with awe. What was the great Cæsar, whom he served, to this mighty Prophet upon whose person and whose life there lay so manifest a glory of the Holy One? His humility, brethren, was of that loyal kind which belongs to simple natures, and is the necessary foundation of all our faith. Yes, I believe it is necessary to the foundation of all true faith, and was of the singular faith of this centurion. Because he was so humble, because he realised the greatness of the Lord Jesus, therefore his expectations were so large. How are we told that he reasoned? He reasoned thus—"I am a man set under authority, having to obey other people, and yet in my little sphere I can say to a man 'Go,' and he goeth; 'Come,' and he cometh; 'Do this,' and he doeth it. How much more, then, has this mighty Prophet power over the agencies of sickness and of health? Surely, He stands within them, has His hand upon the springs of them, can speed them or arrest them with a word. What need is there that He should come down to my house to wrestle with the disease as if standing upon the same level with the forces that created it? Let Him speak the word, and my servant shall be healed." Yes, brethren, the basis of true faith is always humility. No man will believe savingly on Jesus Christ unless he begins by recognising his own personal need of sanctifying and illuminating grace. I never met a blaspheming infidel (and I have met many to my sorrow) who was not characterised by an exceptional and even ludicrous self-conceit, and I believe that not this ludicrous self-conceit, but too great self confidence, is the besetting sin of our time, and especially of some—I do not say all—of the science of our time. Indeed, the gifts of science to man within the last fifty years have been so numerous and so valuable that a certain amount of exulting self-confidence is natural and allowable. But, remember, it is always dangerous and is sometimes productive of most disastrous consequences. For instance, men are not wanting who, because they have been able to trace the relations of some of those phenomena which are within the reach of our comprehension, are ready to say men should not be called upon to believe any-

thing but what the world understand. Why, that is dead in the teeth of all the conclusions of a sound reason. What does reason tell us? Not only that there is an eternal reality lying behind those phenomena with which alone we are acquainted, but also that we can not know it, and for a special reason.

Reason not only tells us we can not know the real which we are obliged to assume, but, as I have said, teaches us why. The reason is this. We can only know the real as it appears to us when it has passed through the forms of our own mind, when it has been changed in the manufactory of our own sensation and perception. We can never know the real as it is, and yet we are obliged to assume that it is. Nevertheless, in the teeth of that incontestable conclusion of all sound human reason, there are men calling themselves leaders of thought who tell us we ought to believe nothing we do not understand. Oh, brethren, beware of intellectual pride! Beware of the pride that comes from insufficient thought! I believe there is no proud man who is not an insufficiently educated man; for when a man has thought to the bottom the great problems of being and knowing he is aware that existence is vaster than his thought, and that he is obliged to perceive what he can not understand. Beware, then, I say, of intellectual pride. Follow reason, and if you follow her loyally she will lead you to the very brink of that world of the real where, handing over the torch of guidance to the grasp of faith, she leaves you to be led by that heavenly guide into the glorious presence of God. Of God! For reason demands a God; faith affirms a God; Jesus Christ reveals a God—the God and Father of Him that on Easter morning rose from the dead, "and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Then I bid you, I beg you, listen to that voice of faith which comes from deeper places of our nature than the voice of reason. Listen to it when it bids you trust to Him who opened for us a door in heaven, and showed us the glory of our eternal Father.

And, my brethren, remember that you can refuse to listen to that voice of faith—that thereon depends your probation. Well, then, will you look and listen? Will you suppress all those foolish emotions of pride, of prejudice, of passion, which dim the inner vision? Will you be humble enough to learn? Will you be truthful enough to open the ear of your soul to the self-evidencing voices of the Spirit of God?

If you will, then you will do God's will. He that does that, the Lord Himself hath said, "shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."

I know there are still persons who continue to object that a man's salvation should depend upon himself, even in that small degree. Why, it has been urged, if God be infinite love and infinite power, does not He compel every man to be saved? A great philosopher, whose name I venerate, actually once went so far as to say: "If the Infinite Love be infinitely powerful, human life is incomprehensible, for infinite love must strive to make all men loving, and infinite power must be able to do it. All men are not loving—few men are loving—therefore I have to conclude either that there is no infinite love, or, if there be such a love, that it is not infinitely powerful." A mere confusion of thought, my brethren, as a single moment's reflection will convince any man. What is the characteristic of human life? What imparts its dignity to human nature? what distinguishes it from the nature that is merely physical and vital? That it has moral freedom, that it is capable of moral choice. But what is the meaning of that? The meaning of it is we are all able to choose to be evil. I have a stone in my hand, and I cast it forth. According to the law of gravitation that stone will describe, according to the angle at which it is thrown, a particular parabolic curve in falling to the earth. It will obey that law accurately. Do we call the stone "good" for obeying that law accurately? You know we do not. Why not, then? Because the stone could not help obeying the law. Man can be "good" for obedience, because he can refuse to render it if he please. Therefore Infinite Power having infinite power can not do a contradiction, can not retain my moral freedom, and force me to do well; for the moment I am made the object of compulsion I cease to possess moral freedom. If God save me by delivering me of my moral freedom, He would not save me; He would degrade me, He would precipitate me from the high platform of moral being to the lower condition of merely physical and instinct-driven life.

Brethren, let us not, in these confusions of thought, distress our souls. God made us morally free, and, therefore, capable of evil; but did the Infinite Love leave us without help when, in consequence of this possibility, we realized it and chose moral evil? Oh! no! With infinite patience, with infinite tenderness, He who could compel us strove to

persuade us to give up our will to Him, not sparing to give His own Son up for us all, that with Him also He might freely give us all things. Yes, all things. Our heavenly Father has given us in Jesus Christ the Lord all the beauties of nature, all the bounties of Providence, all the blessings of grace, withholding nothing from us that by moral means can bring His prodigals home again. Oh! then, my brethren, let us give to Him the only thing we can withhold from Him—the willing obedience of a life of sacrifice to His holy will. Let us pray, "Lord, deepen my humility," or, as the disciples prayed, "Lord increase my faith; that, loving Thee as infinitely as I distrust myself, I may be made by that love conqueror of all my sins."

FAITH AND LOVE.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN FIELDER MACKARNESS.

LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

Preached before the University of Oxford.

I S. JOHN III, 23.

"This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment."

A COMMANDMENT to believe and love! Is there not—we are inclined to ask—some contradiction here? We understand the conviction that grows out of assent to a process of reasoning; we know the personal confidence which proved sincerity and high character inspire; we have had the happy experience of mutual affection "when hearts are of each other sure." But the last thing we should expect would be to have these feelings and convictions arise in us, as it were, by order—in obedience to a superior's command. Indeed, it is a matter of old experience in human life, that the very sound of a command is apt to banish the growing affection, which it ignorantly tries to win. There is a natural waywardness in us which makes us soon tire of what we are constrained to feel or do:—the light and the shadow have vanished out of the prospect on which the eye is obliged all the day long to fix a steadfast gaze; the bird may be gently lured into captivity, but will never approach the snare when a harsh voice bids her come. In moral discipline, especially, who has not known instances of the exercise of a well-meant authority which has had a life-long rebellion for its sad result? So we are perplexed when we are told (as in the text) that it is God's command that we should believe and love.

But consider now how this sense of inconsistency arises. Is it not from our persuasion that our affections and confidences are our own, by their nature absolutely free? that they are such as a stranger cannot meddle with? that they are not ours, but His, if they are the creation of

His will? that it is no longer we who trust and love when another has told us where our trust and love must be reposed? Within the limits of our freedom surely this persuasion is just. Where we have the liberty to love or not to love, it is an outrage on our moral nature to try to take that moral liberty away. But then it is also true that nature puts some limits to this freedom. The moral constitution, which God has given us, is such that we *must* love goodness, unless indeed our constitution is altogether out of order and diseased. The choice of our lovers and our friends is our own, so far at least as concerns the degree of inward affection we bestow on them; but it is no matter of choice for us whether we love the good and hate the evil, or the reverse. Faith, in what we know to be [illegible] faith in any real sense of the word; love for what is vile and base is but a mockery of love. Only, in our common experience, the false and the true, the noble and the base, are so confusedly intermixed, that we have seldom presented to us that which completely answers to our heart's true desire. It is when we come into the presence of God that we find the undoubted object of all our deepest affection and trust. Here God's command and the voice of nature, rightly heard, are one. For the Divine presence is pure goodness; it is true no man hath seen it. "No man hath seen God at any time." We believe in that good and merciful Father whom we have not seen; but then, as if to make this faith more easy to us, it is added, "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." And so the command in the text to believe in the name of Jesus Christ is just God's revelation to us of Himself as the only object of loving faith. All He bids us do is to "come and see." There will be a day when "every eye shall see Him." The eyes that turn away from Him now must needs look upon Him then. But the gracious command comes to us to look now. This if we will do, faith will follow. For faith is God's gift; and to every one who will but come near at His bidding He will freely grant it. Our Lord did not first ask His disciples to believe in him or to love Him; He only said "Follow me." As they followed, they learned unconsciously to believe and love. So it has ever been: God calls men to respond to the preaching of His kingdom; His blessed Son is evidently set forth; if men will but patiently look at Him, the Holy Spirit comes to those attentive hearts. Not

by the force of an alien command, but by the workings of the Spirit in the souls which He has quickened, springs into life the disciple's faith, the child's affectionate trust.

Well would it have been for mankind if this had been always understood, if Christians had remembered that the only legitimate command to faith in Christ is the constraining power of Christ's life and death. To preach Jesus Christ truly, simply, earnestly, is to set in motion the force which takes most captive to His sway. Other kinds of commandment have been tried, alas! how often: prisons and tortures, arbitrary compulsion, the mad zeal of persecutors, and the tyranny of kings. Such commands have wrought no living faith, have borne the stamp of no authority which conscience could allow, have added no true adherents to the Christian cause. It has not been—it never can be—thus that the Holy Spirit works. And if in any branch of the Christian Church such compulsion has been employed, not once, nor twice, but through many ages, if it has been an avowed characteristic of its system, so far that community, it is plain, has not the mind of Christ.

But let us pass from the quality of the commandment in the text to the connection between the things commanded, faith and love. Here, too, is something which has been a perplexity to many, especially in our own time. Mutual duties, brotherly obligations of man to man, they recognize; the world could not go on without them. Even the spirit of love, the spring of these duties, they own, though the sweet old name of charity, with its religion and its poetry, must give place to an uncouth title in philosophic talk. However, in some form or another, it is acknowledged that to love one another is a condition of human society; the cynic may jest about "good haters," but it would be hard to persuade him to live in a community of them; nor, as far as I see, do the coldest advocates of pure selfishness, as a theory, carry their theory to its consistent result. They accept the offerings which unselfish charity brings to them, without so much as a saving protest against the motive of the gift.

So far, in substance, we all agree. It is about the sources and the sanctions of brotherly love that we differ. The Apostle bids us "believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment." The love of our brother is tied to faith in Christ; the very mode and character of it are settled by this command. Unbelievers reply that they see no connection between the two branches

of the text. They admit, indeed, that Christ has brought to light some principles of morals and rules of conduct which were never so declared before. They are fain to own that masters of moral science, and the world at large, owe considerable debt to Christian teaching and practice. And they will carefully collect out of the Scriptures some valuable elements of a pure moral system,—not, indeed, as if they derived any additional value from their place in those Scriptures, or from their Teacher's authority; but just because they fit in well to the systems which the compilers are building up.

But how will they commend these ethical systems to mankind, how secure their adoption and use? By demonstration of their truth, say their advocates. Let them show us, then, the converts they have won; surely the advertisements of morality without religious belief have been long enough before the world to have produced by this time some definite fruit. Men of intelligence, of great powers and varied accomplishments, have taken this matter in hand; it is quite fair to ask, What have they done? These moral armaments ought not to be on paper only; it should be easy by this time to point to moral agencies in active work, to moral victories won. The sinners reclaimed by arguments for undogmatic ethics—where are they? The prodigals who have returned to sit at the feet of some wise lecturer on them—who has seen them? What manner of prayer do they utter when they are yet "a great way off" from the able teacher's door? Or if it be urged that such practical success is no conclusive test of the value of the systems in question, let us ask, at least, whether the persons who uphold them have ever taken any serious pains to bring them under the notice of the outcast and the poor. Is it that they have an uncomfortable suspicion that their demonstrations would be thrown away on the very persons who seem most loudly to call for some reformatory care? Yet surely they ought not to assume this without some practical proof. These systems profess to set forth new truths concerning the life of man, his feelings, motives, hopes, desires. If they have indeed discoveries on these all-important subjects to announce, there is good reason for the evangelists to go forth on their glad errand with hearty zeal. How is it, then, that we never hear of missionary work inspired by this desire? Nay, we hear it maintained, on the other hand, that such zeal is altogether fantastical and unreasonable; that each person must look after himself,

form his own opinions, and take the consequences of his own mistakes. Good Christians who long to see the power of genuine charity increased, who interest themselves in other men's welfare, and try to make the world around them better than it is,—what language do they hear? They are told that all the trouble they are taking is a waste of time and energy, an interference with what does not really concern them. The old question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is answered by a direct negative:—We have nothing to do with our brother, they say. Or, if many shrink from so extreme a statement, yet they contend that they have done all that could be expected of them when they have refuted error, banished old superstitious notions, and brought to light clear principles of moral and metaphysical truth. If poor, wilful, ignorant persons do not notice their philosophy, or act as if they have never heard of it, on their own heads be the mischief; philosophy has done its part, and has no shortcoming to confess.

Still to us, dear brethren, the question returns—we can not get rid of it—How are we to influence character, change hearts and lives, make men love one another? We can not, some of us, look on unmoved at a world of strife and disturbance; angry voices jar upon our ears; lives made miserable by selfishness and vice are a distress to us; we can not help asking ourselves whether nothing can be done for sufferers, even though they suffer by their own fault. And so we try to understand what power it is which, as a matter of fact, moves men to a course of moral rectitude. It is not enough for us to have an admirable ethical system, complete in all its parts—what will set it a-going, so to speak, in the sphere of human life and conduct? We want, not so much theories of morals as moral men. We would welcome with all our hearts the promise of some blessed influence which would change the face of the world. We do not deprecate new ideas, or underrate their possible value; but when we ask for their fruit, there is sometimes but little comfort in the reply. Men have discussed them, criticised them, given them their meed of censure or of approval; opinions have been changed; literature has altered its tone; here a fashion has been introduced, there a habit or practice has become obsolete; but what is the great mass of mankind doing, feeling, ceasing to do or feel, otherwise than as they would have felt and acted if the ideas had never been broached? In our own society—the society of such a place as this—

we watch earnestly, anxiously, to see what power there is which can bid the young man curb his roving desire, can check the utterance of a foul or unworthy wish, charm away the dark suggestion of unholy passion, and fill the fresh, youthful nature with all the generous enthusiasm of a noble, honest life.

Look, then, to a still earlier page of this life which you desire to mould. Watch the formation of childish character. The young child does not learn the rudiments of an ethical code; or, if he learns them, it is not here you expect to find the springs of his actions. It is a living presence that has chiefly, perhaps entirely, affected him; it is some person, near and dear to him, who has made him what he is. He learned, you say, that it was his duty to speak the truth, as a part of his general instruction in morals; it may be so; but it was when he saw his mother's saddened look, when he heard his father's grave rebuke, that he felt how grievous a fault it was to tell a lie. Day by day, as he grew in stature, there came to him gentle pleadings for right, or strong entreaties; commands which he dared not disobey, yet could scarce have told wherefore; remonstrances against his follies, which would have passed by unheeded but for the music of the voice that uttered them. And in yet later years, it may be, he was happy enough to come within the influence of some true-hearted teacher, whose intercourse with him kindled a new desire for well-doing, a higher sense of honor, a keener indignation against wrong. Would to God that this particular experience were universal—that I could appeal, to every one who hears me, for some loving recollection of an honored guide at the critical season of early manhood. Here, in Oxford, it was the hope and intention of those who reared our rich collegiate homes to provide that no student in them should live beyond the reach of such good counsel and guidance as he needed for his soul's health. If it is a matter of common experience now—whether it is so, you must judge—that a youthful member of the university should pass through his years of residence in it, and never hear one word of Christian sympathy, one kindly warning against spiritual dangers; if it is possible for him to be disheartened by the sense that no one cares for him, that no one would listen to his tale of sorrow for wrong-doing, or his longing for escape from its bitter consequences, surely there is something altogether amiss. Do not answer that we have an increase of knowledge. Light is no

substitute for love; light without love is but a bewildering gleam in the darkness of a moral night. But there are some around me who have a happier experience, some who can tell now—as old recollections would enable me to tell—of loved and honored counsellors, whether in authority or contemporaries who shared our studies and our mirth, to whom we owed almost our very selves. I appeal to these for witness to the truth of what I say, that this personal influence was, beyond comparison, the most powerful element of all that determined the spirit and tone of our daily lives. You say that this is irrational; that we ought not to be at the beck and call of our associates; that it is nobler to be guided by pure reason than by the persuasive influence even of the best of friends. But you do not consistently maintain that view. The child who refuses to obey you, until you have convinced him of the absolute reasonableness of your command, is not your favourite; you rather hold it to be a token of an ungenerous and ungenial temper, that he should put no trust in the wisdom with which your authority is exercised. You detest the perpetual iteration of a fretful "Why?" You see in the ready obedience of a trustful character the promise of a nobler, happier life.

You will have seen already, brethren, with what purpose I am appealing to this testimony which human nature gives to the personal influences that chiefly determine the character of our lives. Does it not illustrate the larger truth, that the deepest and most powerful motive in our whole life and conduct is the fear and love of God? In the forefront of the commandments, which stand for a practical summary of the moral law, we are met by the solemn statement, "God spake these words, and said." There are arguments, powerful arguments, for each one of those commandments, founded on their reasonableness, their utility, their relation to the dictates of human conscience; but no word of all this is spoken. Only we hear "God spake these words, and said." And "the mount that burned with fire," "the blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and voice of words," —what was all this solemnity of publication but an impressive enforcement of the truth that the dictates of morality are the voice of God? It is a matter of simple fact, that when that voice has ceased to sound in human ears, the law has ceased to hold its rightful place in human hearts and lives. To pass from the wide generalities of history to what

we have ourselves known and felt, it is a matter of fact also that the sense of God's presence—the inward feeling that He is near us, about our path, and about our bed, spying out all our ways—has been a deterrent from wrong, a provocative to all good, such as no mere statement of moral verities, on their own account, ever could or did supply. Therefore it is that men rely on the sanctity of oaths and religious vows, that they have been wont to make the most solemn engagements of their lives in the courts of the Lord's house, that they call upon Him to witness their tender of national allegiance to earthly rulers, that their very salutations and tokens of friendship have some request for His benediction woven into their familiar form.

I do not deny that in old times this religious sanction of all moral law had in it something of terror. They who heard the voice of God on Sinai found it so terrible as to make them entreat "that the word should not be spoken to them any more." Yet even under the Old Dispensation there was quite another feeling too. All through Psalm cxix. how tenderly the Psalmist dwells on his love for the law of God, because it is God's law. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? Even by ruling himself after Thy word. With my whole heart have I sought Thee; let me not go wrong out of Thy commandments. Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I should not sin against Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord! O teach me Thy statutes. . . . I will talk of Thy commandments, and have respect unto Thy ways. My delight shall be in Thy statutes; and I will not forget Thy word." The law and the testimony are beautiful exceedingly in themselves; but they never present themselves to the Psalmist's mind in that abstract perfection; to him they are the object of reverent contemplation, of holy delight, of earnest observance, still for the same paramount reason, that they belong to God.

To us these tender expressions of loving attachment to the law of God are an anticipation of a complete escape from the terrors of Sinai. St. Paul dwells upon the condition of Christians in marked contrast to that earlier state. "Ye are not come unto the mount that burned with fire . . . but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant." As we stand in that blessed presence, and claim our right of entrance among "the innumerable company of angels, and

the spirits of just men made perfect," what do we hear but such words as those of my text—"This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another"?

I am well persuaded, brethren—and the more I think of it, the firmer does that persuasion become—that in the faith of Jesus Christ lies the sure ground of Christian morality, and the guarantee for its power over Christian hearts. I do not understand what that morality is until I have thought upon His life: not until I have learned to love it in His character do I desire it for myself. When St. Peter can answer without misgiving the thrice-repeated question, 'Lovest thou me?" he is ready for a life of Christian duty, and, if need be, of suffering too. St. Paul has no need to recite rules of conduct, or to construct a system of behaviour; quite simply, very shortly he has this one thing to say, "To me to live is Christ." And when he would dwell on "the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ," still all his thought and wish is "to know Christ, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." What wonders the knowledge of Him, and the contemplation of His sufferings, have wrought! At this moment some peasants among the mountains far away are setting forth, in their poor fashion, the story of His death; and strangers from all Europe flock together to gaze upon the scene. What effect that sight may have on the thousands whom it draws together I do not venture to guess. Sight is not faith, and it may be that their gazing is more akin to sight than to faith; I can not tell. But this is certain: that so far as that—or any other—contemplation of the life and death of Christ brings men face to face with that Blessed One, in the spirit of an earnest desire to know Him, so far as that knowledge is the handmaid of a true faith in Him, so do men become in earnest His disciples, learners at His lips, followers at His steps, and imitators—alas! at how great a distance—of His perfect love. They have faith in Him, and love one another for His sake. And are you wondering that so many do not believe in Him? Is there not at least as much cause for wonder, that our own faith is so weak? We have learned by heart the inspired record of that beautiful life; we bow our head instinctively when that holy name is named; we love the sight of His cross; year by year we keep the festivals that commemorate His acts of grace. Can it be that these things have become

mere forms to us, relics of a faith that one was vigorous and true? God forbid. Yet something there is surely wanting in our faith; it needs to be animated with a new energy, if it is to have the effect, of which I have spoken, on our lives. To me, brethren, it seems that the very unbelief, which is seething around us, should have braced our souls, and awakened us to new energy by the demand on our service which it so earnestly makes. This is no time for languid assent to theological truths, for quiet enjoyment of the music to which we recite our creeds. Christ has work for us to do in His behalf: to make Him known, to be very bold in confessing Him, to bring out in all their beauty His mercies and gifts, wherever men will let us speak to them; to trust wholly to His guidance, in spite of ridicule and contempt; day by day to try to live His hidden life, and more and more to feel the power of His death; to take Him into our very hearts with an adoring love; to long for His appearing, and even now to see Him near. What sort of Christians are we if these affections, these efforts, these longings, have no place within us? "Lord, we believe: help Thou our unbelief." So let us pray, and He will help us indeed. We shall not always have this poor, cold, hesitating faith; we shall not always be divided one from another by [illegible] moments which never multiply when faith is weak. Loving, trusting, believing, we shall kindle new hopes and energies in the whole company of believers; God will yet do more things for us, none greater than this, that He will teach us to love one another, as He gave us command to do—that is, even as He has loved us.

THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S.

BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. LIGHTFOOT,

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral.

ST. MARK XII, 17.

"Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

I SUPPOSE that as I read these words my hearers will entertain no doubt about the subject which I wish to bring before them. The text and the application of the text are too familiar to leave them in any uncertainty. The preacher who selects it must desire to say something on the relations of church and state. He must intend to discuss the advantages or the disadvantages of an establishment. He must wish to adjust and apportion the obligations which we owe to the civil and the spiritual powers respectively. He must propose drawing a line between our duties as citizens—as men of the world, and our duties as Christians—as churchmen. Let me say plainly at the outset that I have no such intention. I do not underrate the importance of such questions; but the subject which I purpose bringing before you this afternoon is far more momentous to you and to me than any political aspects of religion. I do not underrate their importance, but I do not intend speaking of them to-day, because, if I understand the text aright, it has nothing at all to do with such topics, or, at least, it has only a very remote and indirect bearing upon them. It does not direct our attention towards—but it calls our attention away from—the political aspects of the gospel.

This language perhaps will seem startling to some. They have been accustomed to regard the text as the chief authority on this subject. They have seen it so quoted frequently in the newspaper. They have heard it so applied again and again in sermons. Churchmen and Nonconformists, friends of establishment and foes of establishment, have alike accepted it in this bearing. But can this possibly be its bearing?

If this were so it must be intended to draw a broad line of demarcation between two sets of duties. Here is one set of obligations which we owe to Cæsar and not to God; and there is another set which we owe to God and not to Cæsar. Keep the two quite distinct; do not think at all of God's pleasure or displeasure when you are doing Cæsar's work; and do not regard Cæsar's approval or disapproval when you are doing God's work. If the purport of the precept, I say, is distinction, the distinction must be as sharp and definite as this. It proclaims in fact a duality of authority. Yet we are startled when the issue is thus plainly set before us. Can anything be imagined more unscriptural—might I not say more irreligious, more blasphemous—than this? Is not the Bible from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation one unbroken protest against this sharp distinction of the secular and the spiritual? Does it not teach us that our religion must be everywhere because God is everywhere? And more especially when it enforces our duties towards temporal rulers, what language does it hold? Are we not plainly told that we owe obedience to [illegible] because they are God's instruments, God's representatives, God vicegerents? See how St. Paul emphasizes this truth. "There is no power," he says, "but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. Whoso resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. He is a minister of God to thee for good. He is a minister of God to execute wrath. For this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are God's ministers." Not less than six times in as many verses does St. Paul reiterate this statement that allegiance to our temporal rulers is allegiance also to God; and in the last passage, as you will have observed, the precept has reference to this very matter of paying tribute. It is plain, therefore, that the text cannot mean this; and if we desire to know what is its real purport we must investigate the circumstances which called the words forth. Who were the questioners? What was their motive?

The questioners, we are told, were the Pharisees and Herodians. With the Pharisees we are well acquainted. Of the Herodians we know nothing except what this incident reveals. Whether they were a religious sect or a political party, we are not informed. Their name only shows that they were favourable to the ascendency of Herod and Herod's family. The Pharisees and the Herodians alike must have had a genuine interest in the question which they asked—"Is it lawful to

professed leaders they were? Could the Herodians wish Him well when He stigmatized their chief as a fox? Therefore they conspired. They appealed to His courage. "Thou art true and carest for no man." They will flatter His pride and lure Him to His ruin. The question places Him in a dilemma. "Shall we give tribute to Cæsar or not?" If He answered "Yes" He would lose caste: He would forfeit His character for boldness: He would offend the scruples of the religious zealots: He would sink into a mere truckler and time-server. If He had any design of becoming a popular leader—possibly a Messiah—this would be its death's blow. Antagonism to foreign rule was the only standing-ground for such a leader as this. But this was not what they hoped. They desired that He would answer "No." By praising His courage and independence of spirit they strove to elicit this answer from Him, and if He should so answer their work was done. It was overt treason: it was rank rebellion. The iron grip of the Roman authorities would close upon Him at once, and there would be an end of Him. Their conduct was of a piece with the shameful hypocrisy which afterward raised the cry, "We have no king but Cæsar"—Cæsar whom they detested—Cæsar against whom their heart of hearts rebelled—Cæsar whose yoke they would have thrown off to-morrow if they could.

Our Lord's reply is not direct; not "Yes" nor "No." He asks for a penny, a denarius, the common silver coin of the day. What do they see there? The broad brow, the laurel crown, the stern, cruel, impenetrable visage of Tiberius, the reigning emperor, or, perhaps, the singularly handsome regular features of his predecessor, the now deified Augustus. And this portraiture, this name thus stamped on the coin, is, in some sense, a mark of ownership. It comes from Cæsar's mint and must be restored to Cæsar's exchequer. It symbolizes the obligations which are due to the civil power. It tells of a fixed and orderly government which secures their lives and properties to them, which provides for the impartial administration of justice, which watches over and regulates commercial transactions, which would assign its weight and its value to this very coin, which, in short, makes life possible and worth living for them. Cæsar's head, Cæsar's superscription, is engraved upon the coin, just as it is engraved upon the institutions under which they live. The question was not rightly put—"Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" The answer is, "You are not only per-

mitted—you are bound—to give tribute. The payment is the repayment for the inestimable benefits which you have received from the state."

This, then, is the purport of our Lord's answer. He declares not, indeed, the divine right of Augus, or of Tiberius—not the divine right of Kings or Emperors, or yet the divine right of democracies, but the divine right of established government—the divine right of law and order. The argument would have been just as valid, if, instead of Augustus or of Tiberius, the head of the Roman republic had been stamped upon that coin.

"Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Here is the complete answer to their question. But this is not enough. The opportunity is seized; a rebuke is administered; and a lesson is enforced. These Pharisees were very scrupulous about the lower duties of religion, but very forgetful of the higher. They paid their tithe of mint and anise and cumin to the extreme farthing, and yet they omitted the weightier matters of the law, and judgment, and mercy, and truth. They washed the outside of the cup and platter, but within they were full of extortion and excess. So here they are infinitely scrupulous, or, at least, they feign themselves so—infinitely scrupulous about the political aspects of religion; but are they equally anxious about the moral and the spiritual? This is the frame of mind which our Lord would correct. "Yes," He seems to say, "ask, if you will, what is your duty with regard to Cæsar, but do not stop here. Do not rest content with dwelling on the politics of religion. Rise above your relations towards Cæsar, and face your relations towards God. This silver piece is a type—is a parable for you. Is there no other tribute, think you, which you owe to a higher than Cæsar? Is there no other coinage which bears the image and superscription of one greater than Cæsar? Aye, for is it not written, 'God created man in His own image: in the image of God created He him.' His effigy is stamped upon thee: His name and attributes are written around thee. From His mint thou wast issued, and to His treasury must thou be repaid. If to Cæsar thou owest the tribute of the perishable coin, to God thou owest the tribute of thy soul, thy heart, thy mind, thy life—the tribute of thyself." I suppose that for every one who is really eager about the spiritual and the personal aspects of religion—who hungers and thirsts

after righteousness—whose soul pants after the living God—scores of persons take an active and a sincere interest in the polemics of religion—the controversy between Romanism and Protestantism, the disputes between churchmen and Nonconformists, the relations of church and state. This is not a disease of any one time or any one place. It was characteristic alike of the orthodox Pharisee and the heretic Samaritan. When the Samaritan woman suddenly finds herself face to face with a prophet, how does she use her opportunity? "Sir, teach me how to lay aside this burden of wickedness"? "Sir, help me to cleanse my sin-stained life"? "Sir, bring me nearer to God"? Not this, but "Sir, tell me whether at Jerusalem or on this mount men ought to worship"—a question not unimportant in itself, a question to which there was a right and a wrong answer, but a question infinitely little, infinitely valueless, to her then and there—to her with her God-forsaken heart—to her with her sullied life.

Whose is this image and superscription?—this which is stamped on thyself, O man? It was not an uncommon metaphor to speak of men as coin—the dishonest as bad, and spurious, and counterfeit, the upright as genuine currency, with the true ring. So an apostolic father writes in the next age, "There are two coinages—the one of God, the other of the world, and each is stamped with its own device. The unbelievers bear the impress of this world, believers the impress of God the Father, through Jesus Christ." When, then, having first asked, "Whose image is this?" our Lord closes with the injunction, "Render to God the things that are God's," is it too much to infer that the connecting link between the symbol and the application was the familiar text at the beginning of Genesis, "In the image of God created He him." Whose is this image? Look into your own heart, and see what lineaments are traced there. What is this conscience, approving, stimulating, terrifying, punishing, but the impress of the righteousness of God? What is this capacity of progress which distinguishes you from the beasts that perish, which urges you ever forward, eager and restless, the individual and the race alike, but the signet of the perfection of God? What is this power of memory and imagination which annihilates time and space, penetrating into the prehistoric past, and projecting itself into the boundless future, traversing the heavens with more than the speed of lightning, but the stamp of the infinity of God? What is this anxiety

about the hereafter, the desire of posthumous fame, the interest in descendants yet unborn, this witness of your immortality within you, but the seal set upon you by the eternity of God? Yes, everywhere are God's features stamped upon your soul, however blurred by ill usage, and however corroded by rust.

But it will be objected, "Suppose that the doctrine of evolution, of development, of which I hear so much in this day"—suppose that this doctrine be true. What then? The fact remains a fact by whatever process it came to be a fact. The image does not cease to be God's image in whatever furnace the metal was fused. The superscription does not cease to be God's superscription by whatever die the coin was stamped. Your faculties, your aspirations, your needs, are still the same, and they bear the impress of an eternal, infinite, perfect, righteous being.

But, once again, what is this image and superscription—this which is stamped on thee, O Christian? When thy brow was sealed in baptism, with what signet was it sealed? Remember how the apostle speaks of admission into the church of Christ, and to the privileges of the gospel, as a recreating, a renewing, after the image of God.

In this second creation the same image was restamped upon you. The blurred lines were sharpened as you passed once again through the mint of God. The obverse is still the face of God, while the reverse is the cross of Christ. The old ownership is doubly confirmed. You are bought—bought with the heaviest price which even God Himself could pay. You are not your own: you are God's. God's by redemption, now, as you were God's by creation before. "Render to God the things which are God's."

THE JOYFUL SOUND.

BY THE RIGHT REV. W. D. MACLAGAN, D. D.,

BISHOP OF LICHFIELD.

Preached in Holy Trinity Church, Paddington.

PSALM LXXXIX, 15.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance."

In the words which I have chosen for my text, David speaks of the blessedness of the people that know the joyful sound. In these words there is possibly a reference to some of the more joyous festivals in the Jewish church. For although the characteristic of the service of God under the older dispensation was rather that it deepened the sense of sin, and led men to look onward to a Saviour by its daily sacrifices—by its yearly day of atonement, yet there were brighter gleams which illuminated that service of the older church. One of them was the annual feast—the most joyous of all, which they called the feast of trumpets; for the word that is used here by the psalmist signifies the joyful noise that comes from the sound of the trumpet. But there was a special reference, probably, to a greater feast still. Although, year by year, the sound of the trumpet brightened the hearts of God's chosen people, yet there was one year in which that sound brought them exceeding joy. It was the year of jubilee when, on the day of atonement—when all the solemn services of that day were over, there was brought to the suffering and to the poor and to the distressed among the nation exceeding great joy. At the sound of that trumpet every slave was set free. At the sound of that trumpet the poor man who had parted with his possession in his need had that possession restored to him. And so through the length and the breadth of the land there was heard the joyful sound. And it may have been with special reference

to this jubilee feast that David spoke in the words of our text—"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound."

But yet the words had a deeper meaning even for David; for all through the teaching of that older time there was an under-current heard by those who had ears to hear, which told them of exceeding joy. It was the hope which was the centre of their life—the great object of their longings—the hope of one who would deliver them from worse than earthly bondage, and restore them to a possession which they had forfeited by their sin. It was this joyful sound which whispered consolation to our first parents in the very hour of their fall, when they were told that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It was this which nerved the faith of Abraham as he turned his back upon his home and his kindred. It was this which tuned the heart of David as he sang his psalms of joy. It was this which kindled the soul of the prophet Isaiah as he prophesied of the coming salvation. It was this which cheered the hearts of God's captive people in their long bondage in Babylon; and, at last, it swelled into the song of angels as they told the glad tidings of great joy to all people. And blessed were they who, in that golden time, could know the joyful sound. The patriarchs, the prophets, the psalmist of those days of old, the just and the devout, such as Simeon and Hannah, waiting for the consolation of Israel—these knew the joyful sound—the sound of a coming salvation; and they knew the blessedness which even that sound of promise brought to their longing hearts. But to us have not these words a deeper meaning still? The joyful sound which stirs our hearts tells us, not of a coming salvation, but of a Saviour who has come. We know, as the apostle says, that the Son of God is come; and it is because we know the joyful sound which proclaims that first coming, mighty to save, that we look forward with hope and expectation to that day when He shall come again to fetch His people home. "Blessed are the people that know this joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance."

It is a blessedness which, in some measure, belongs to us all. We have heard of it from our childhood. We are not, like the heathen, without God and without hope. We learned at our mother's knee to sing of gentle Jesus. We learned to lisp our prayers to His Father and our Father which is in heaven. Oh, blessedness above all words to tell,

that we should have this happy privilege of being nurtured in a Christian land! But, my friends, what responsibility does such a privilege lay upon us! What will God not expect of us who, from our childhood, have heard this joyful sound! And what does God find in us? Does He find in our daily lives—does He read in our inmost hearts—the marks of those that know the joyful sound? Do we find in our own hearts anything of that blessedness of which the text here speaks to us—"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound"? It is not enough to hear that sound. David speaks of knowing it; and these are two very different things. We may know all about it, and yet not know that joyful sound. It is not enough for us that we can tell clearly of the way of salvation through Christ Jesus—that we can stand up in the house of God and recite with intelligent hearts the creed which sums up our faith and our hope. All this may be: it is with thousands, and yet they know not the joyful sound. To them it brings no joy. It is something which stands outside of themselves—something which they hear with their ears and understand with their lives, but which never comes home with power to their hearts. But "Blessed are those," says the psalmist, "that *know* the joyful sound."

And what a joyful sound is that which the gospel declares to us! What significance there was in the arrangements of that day of jubilee! The atonement must first be offered before the bondman is set free—before the possession is restored. And the sound of the gospel of peace declares to us that the atonement is made once and forever—the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world; and it speaks to us, the bondmen of sin, and tells us that He who died for us came to set the captive free. And it speaks to us who, through our sins, had forfeited the kingdom of our God, and tells us that He, our Saviour, has opened that kingdom of heaven again to all believers. This is the joyful sound which the gospel of Christ sounds in the ears of Christ's people, and sounds in the hearts of them that truly believe; and blessed are the people that know this joyful sound.

But how many there are to whom this is but an idle tale—an empty, not a joyful, sound. They know not the deliverance which has been achieved for them at that awful price. They never felt that bondage from which the Son of God has come to deliver them. They never mourn over the loss of that happy heavenly home from which unpardoned sin will shut

us out for ever. And though the gospel sound rings in their ears from day to day, they know not its joyfulness or the blessedness of the people of God. And yet, my friends, what a joyful sound it is! The soul, burdened with a sense of unforgiven sin—the soul that trembles at the thought of death and judgment—that dares not face the awful thought of standing before that judgment-seat, each giving an account of himself to God,—to such a soul, when once the sense of sin has grasped it and holds it fast—when once it has come to that awful experience which David speaks of in one of his psalms—"My sins have taken such hold upon me that I am not able to look up,"—then the blessedness of that joyful sound is indeed realized. Are there any of you, my friends, who have known that awful and yet most blessed experience?—awful, because no agony of soul can compare with that which the sinner feels when he realizes his condition in the sight of a holy God; but, oh, a thousandfold more blessed than the easy unconcern with which men live and with which men die who have never known the pangs of guilt, and never known the joyful sound. How many hundreds there are around us—how many there may be in this house of God to-night, who have never had one anxious thought of—never given one solemn consideration to—the prospects of their never-dying souls throughout eternity! They shut out all these thoughts with the absorbing cares and the fleeting pleasures of a perishing world, content to live in a fool's paradise to dream away the few short years of life, and then wake up to the awful realities of eternity. I say a thousandfold more blessed than that careless, godless, reckless worldliness in which so many thousands live and die, is the fiercest agony of a sin-burdened soul, because it opens the heart to hear the joyful sound—the joyful sound which tells that, sinners though we be, and crushed beneath a load of guilt which is insupportable to us, there is one who has died to take away our sins; "and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all." You who have heard that joyful sound speaking to your hearts know well the blessedness of which the psalmist speaks. You who know nothing of it but as an empty expression which you have heard a thousand times—which has fallen on your ear and rebounded again into the wide air, I ask you to-night, would you not indeed rejoice with a joy that you have never known before if to your hearts should come home, by the power of God's Holy Spirit, that joyful sound? Would it not be a joy to all

of us? But to the utterly hard and utterly worldly—and God knows there may be some such even in a house of prayer—would it not be to them, of all others, a joy above all joy to hear the voice of Jesus speaking to their hearts, "Go in peace: thy sins are forgiven thee." They are forgiven? I speak not of a coming blessing in some possible future, but of a present joy. "Go in peace: thy sins are forgiven thee;" "for the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all." Oh, blessed souls who know that joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.

But, again, there are souls that have been roused to seek after God—who have long since begun the awful struggle against still unconquered sin—who are striving against the principalities and powers that surround them as they seek to fight their way to the open gate of the heavenly city, and whose hearts almost sink and fail within them as temptation comes back again and again, and as, through their weakness, they fall under temptation's power. And they ask themselves, "Is there no hope? Shall I never be delivered from this awful oppression? The enemy crieth so, and the ungodly cometh on so fast; my enemies live and are mighty, and I have no power to overcome them." Are there any who have known such a blessed unrest as this—such a glorious state of conflict as this—the conflict of an awakened soul against the powers of evil? Is it not a joyful sound which speaks to you from the lips of Jesus?—"My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Oh, is it not a joy above all words to such a soul—cast down, trembling, fearing—scarce venturing to hope—almost driven to despair in that conflict against sin, to hear the joyful promise of a grace which no temptation will be too powerful for—which no sin can long resist—the grace of Him who has grace enough and to spare for all His struggling, suffering children? Oh, "blessed are the people that know the joyful sound." The conflict may not cease in a day, but they know that, at last, the victory is sure. "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance."

But, again, there are souls that are weary with the long labor and toil and trial of the heavenward road. A languor seems to settle down upon the heart, and, as life goes on, and the shadows deepen,

the heart is filled with a sadness which it cannot express. They are weary of the conflict—long that it were over, yet wondering how or when it shall be. Oh, with all the power of joy comes to such hearts the blessed promise of our Lord and Saviour to all weary souls—"Come unto me, and I will give you rest." Seek refuge in that loving heart of Jesus, and all the weariness of life shall be turned into rest and peace. Nay, but a few short years, or months, or days, and then the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Blessed are they who experience the weariness, the trials, the sorrows, the bereavements of life, and hear the joyful sound: with weary step but with steadfast heart they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.

Or, once more, there are souls among us who all their lifetime, through fear of death, are subject to bondage. They look onward to that inevitable hour when the messenger will come who cannot be put off. They think of the pains of dissolution—of the weakness of departing life—of the darkness of the Valley of the Shadow of Death; and they ask themselves, "How shall I bear all this?—to lie in that last hour when none can help and none can comfort—shut out, it may be, from the outer world—seeing no longer the loved faces around me—hearing no longer the words of love spoken to my ear—all alone at last, and going down into the dark valley? How shall I bear that last—that awful—that necessary trial of life's close?" Are there not some of you who know such fears as these?—fears which, if they come upon you in the darkness of the night, you can scarce bear to think of, but which you turn away, busier with other things. But you cannot turn death away. You cannot avoid the awful hour itself, though you may now avoid the thought of it. And so all your lifetime, through fear of death, you are subject unto bondage. And is it not a joy to you when the blessed message of salvation tells you of one who has been down into that dark valley before you?—known all its pains and all its perils, and is touched with the feeling of your infirmity—one who promises that He will be with you when all others must leave you; for none, even of those who love you most, can go down one step into that dark valley beside you. But He tells you that even there He will be with you. If you have given your heart to Him and known Him as your

Saviour and your God, He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, least of all in that dread hour when thou needest most the help of thy Saviour, thy God, thy Friend." Oh, blessed are the people that know this joyful sound; even in that dark valley they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.

My friends, how far is this blessedness our own? Have we ever heard in our hearts these glad tidings of forgiveness, of grace, and of rest to the tempted, sinful, weary, troubled soul? Oh, I beseech you, if you know nothing of these things but as an empty sound, give no rest to your God—and He is waiting to be gracious—give no rest to your God in your prayers and your tears till, in your own blessed experience in laying hold of Christ as all your salvation and all your desire, and yielding up your hearts to Him who gave Himself to die for you, you can say, out of the depths of a joyful and thankful experience, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound." Oh, that before the Christmas season comes, to repeat again in our ears the message of joy with which the coming Saviour was heralded into a guilty world, you might all know that joyful sound, and go forth, if God spare you to begin another year, to walk in the light of His countenance.

One moment let our thoughts rest upon that blessedness. "They shall walk in the light of Thy countenance." What safety is there here! If the light of God shine on our path, however hard it may be, we shall not stumble. Oh, it is safety indeed to walk in the light of that countenance. And what joy, as well as safety, to see the light that streams from the countenance of a reconciling God—that streams in peace within the troubled, trembling heart—that tells you of love everlasting with which He has loved you, and reminds you of loving-kindness with which He has drawn you. Blessed, indeed, are they who walk in the light of that countenance. All life long that light of love streams in quiet radiance upon their heavenward path. Clouds and darkness may be round about—trials and troubles and sorrows and cares; but still the light shines on. They walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. And they walk in that light on and on—nearer and nearer to the light itself, shining more and more, unto the perfect day. As the belated traveller sees afar off the light of his loved home and presses onward and the light grows brighter and shines more clearly on his homeward path, so does the child of God, as he journeys heavenward, see that far-shining

light and knows that it tells him of the joys and love of his heavenly home. But, oh, what is the light that shines from that home now compared with the light that shines within that happy city of God!—what the joyful sound that falls upon our ears in this life of trial to the sounds which shall fill our ears and our hearts through all eternity! Oh, surely, though in measure that blessedness is ours even in this life on earth, it will only be ours in fulness in that life in heaven when, joining our hallelujahs with angels and archangels, and our thankful anthems with all the ransomed ones of God, and singing our hymns to one who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood and has made us kings and priests unto God, we shall dwell forever in that presence where there is fulness of joy, seeing the very light of God as it streams from His loving face upon His gathered children. It is then that in all its fulness His ransomed ones will know the depth of meaning in those words of promise, "Blessed are the people who know that joyful sound; for they shall walk for ever and for ever, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance."

ELI AND HIS SONS.

BY THE REV. CANON LIDDON, D. D.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday Afternoon, July 11, 1886.

1 Samuel iii, 13.

"Because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not."

This is the reason assigned by God through the mouth of Samuel for the heavy punishment which was to visit the family of Eli. Eli, the high priest of Israel, was descended, as you will remember, from Ithamar, the younger of the sons of Aaron. How the younger line of Ithamar came to be substituted for the elder line of Eleazar we do not know. Eli would seem to have succeeded Abishai of the elder line of Eleazar, and there must have been some occurrence involving failure on the part of Eleazar's descendants, and special favour toward the descendants of Ithamar, to account for an arrangement which violated the hereditary law which governs the transmission of the priesthood. As it was, Abishai's descendants lived on as private persons in Israel until the days of Zadok, who succeeded to the high priesthood when Abiathar, the last of the high priests of the line of Ithamar, was deposed by Solomon for his share in the rebellion of Adonijah. Eli, then, was the first high-priest of the family of Ithamar, and Eli was not only high-priest, he was judge of Israel as well. Thus uniting in his person the functions of a chief, ecclesiastical ruler and temporal sovereign. His position is one, at least in the early days of Israel, quite unique; nothing nearly resembling it occurs again before the days of the Maccabees. Eli passed his life for the most part at Shiloh, the ancient sanctuary, situated in one of the most secluded valleys of the tribe of Ephraim. Shiloh, as the name implies, was a place of rest; there Israel rested after his long wanderings in the desert, after his fierce struggle for the possession of Canaan; there the ark rested after the conquest of the country, when it was brought from Gilgal; there it rested from the

closing days of Joshua to the early years of Samuel; there, as every devout Israelite believed, the Lord Jehovah rested in an especial mode and presence, as was implied by the prayer: "Hear, thou that sittest between the cherubim"—meaning those which overshadowed the ark; there, as from the seat of judgment, Joshua finally divided Western Palestine among the tribes; there, from father to son in steady succession, the descendants of Aaron in the line of Eleazar had exercised their priesthood, and there was now installed Eli of Ithamar's line, Eli with his sons and his dependents, living in a scene already rich with sacred associations, with inspiring and illustrious memories. It was at Shiloh that Eli spent his years tranquilly, and busy and in the main, honourable years they were. Busy undoubtedly they were, since he had in his hands the civil as well as the religious administration of the country. With what gracious dignity he ordinarily discharged the duties of his high office, we know from the visits which were paid by Hannah to Shiloh, both before and after the birth of Samuel. Well fitted truly was Shiloh to be the seat of an ecclesiastical ruler, lying as it did on the main road, which ran through the country from north to south, lying among hills which fairly shut it in on every side but one, their sides terraced with vines, olives, and fig-trees, while in the plain below, on a slight eminence levelled by the hand of man, stood the tabernacle, containing the most precious things in Israel, and surrounded by the priests and Levites and others concerned in the civil and religious government of the country. Shiloh was never a capital, as was Jerusalem, as was Samaria, as was even Shekem. During the greater part of the year it was as quiet as any small country cathedral town in England; only when at the great yearly festival, devout Israelites crowded from every tribe to their central national sanctuary, was its seclusion invaded. Well might it have seemed an ideal home of prayer and study, and mild authority and ripe wisdom, where piety and integrity and purity and philanthropy might be trained to high perfection for the common good. Yet Shiloh was the scene of the base avarice, the high-handed violence, and the vulgar profligacy of the sons of Eli, and Shiloh was the scene of Eli's weakness, so culpable in itself, so fraught with ruin in its consequences to his family and to his house, when "his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not."

Eli, let us observe, was otherwise and personally a good man. His

character underwent searching tests at the most critical period of his life, and it is clear that he was resigned, humble, and in a true sense devout; Eli's resignation to the will of God was conspicuous on the very trying occasion of the announcement of his punishment for the great failing which will presently be noticed. He was told that his family would be replaced by the rival house; that his sons would die both of them on a single day; that those members of his race who were not cut off in their youth would be in a worse position than those who were, since they would have to beg their bread of their rivals; that none of his descendants would attain to old age; that neither bloody nor unbloody sacrifices whereby the ordinary sins both of the priests and people were purged under the ancient law would avail to cancel the sins of his family. If Eli had been the successor of a long line of rulers of the religion of Israel, submission would have been easier. "You can fall with dignity," it has been said, "when you have behind you a great history." It was easier for Louis XVI. to mount the scaffold, than for Napoleon to embark for St Helena. Eli had succeeded to a position to which his family could never have expected to succeed in the ordinary course of things. He hoped, no doubt, that his sons would secure to his family the dignity of the priesthood for all coming time, at least for many a generation to come; he hoped he was to be the first of a long line of priests of the house of Ithamar. The disappointment of a hope like this is much more than any but a good man can experience without repining, and Eli, had he been other than a good man, might have argued that the severity of the sentence meted out to him was out of proportion to his personal fault.

His fault, after all, was not positive but negative; he had only done less than he ought to have done; he had sinned out of good nature, out of an easy temper, but could he have been chastised more severely had he himself sinned viciously and out of *malice prepense?* This is what many a man would have said in Eli's position; but Eli is too certain that he is in the hands of One who is all just, as well as all powerful, to attempt or to think of complaint or remonstrance. When an unknown prophet first announced to him his sentence he was silent; when the boy Samuel repeated the sentence he uttered words which, next after those in Gethsemane, have given expression to religious resignation for all time. "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." And

Eli's personal goodness is also seen in his humility; he submits to be rebuked and sentenced by his inferior without a word of remonstrance. The nameless member of a prophetic order tells a man who is at the head of the religious as well as the civil state of Israel, that his conduct has been marked by ingratitude to God, and that the doom of degradation awaits his house. We know how rulers like Ahab and Manasseh treated prophets, however eminent, who told them unwelcome truths. Eli listens, he is silent; no violent word, much less any act of violence, escapes him, when thus confronted with what a less humble man would certainly have deemed gross impertinence, and the message of the nameless prophet is repeated by the boy Samuel, whose patron Eli was, and to whose parents he had been kind. Samuel was, as we know, even as a lad, favoured by heavenly vision, but Samuel stood in much the same relation toward Eli, that a chorister in the cathedral might be to the Archbishop of Canterbury, or, rather, to a person, if such there were, who should combine the office of primate of the church and of prime minister, and yet when Samuel tells Eli, in God's name, that God would do a thing in Israel at which "both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle"—meaning the degradation and punishment of his patron's family, Eli is even eager to hear the very utmost that the boy has to say, for he is thinking not of the channel through which the message comes, but only of its substance, or its ground in truth, of its moral rather than its official authority. He has no petty sense of offended dignity that must vent its spleen on the messenger, when his conscience tells him that the message is only what he might expect to hear. This, I say, is true humility, the desire, the determination to see ourselves as we really are, to bear ourselves toward God and toward our fellow men accordingly.

And, thirdly, Eli's personal piety is especially noticeable at the moment of his death. You remember the scene, one of the most emphatic in the Old Testament. The struggle to throw off the Philistine yoke had not yet ended; the Philistines, indeed, were making a supreme effort that it should end in the permanent subjection of Israel. They had come up in force out of their own plain on the Mediterranean shore; they were encamped in a strong position in the hills of the country at Aphek, near Mizpah; they had already inflicted a severe defeat on the Israelites, when the idea occurred to some of the soldiers in the beaten

army that if only the ark of the covenant, the ark of the sacred presence, could be brought from Shiloh to the camp of Israel, Israel's victory over the Philistines would be inevitable. There were obvious objections to such a use of the ark, but the danger was pressing. Eli weakly consented, and his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, went forth as guardians of the most precious thing in Israel to the battlefield of Aphek. The Philistines, indeed, themselves were at first terrified. They knew the history of the passage of the Jordan, they knew the history of the conquest of Canaan; but in the event they inflicted a crushing defeat on Israel. Thirty thousand Israelites, and among them Hophni and Phinehas, were left dead upon the field, and the ark fell into the hands of the victorious Pagans. Eli, bearing the weight of his ninety-eight years, sat trembling and expectant by the side of the road leading to the watch tower of Shiloh. Eli, blind as he was, could not see the messenger who had suddenly appeared running up the narrow defile, and whose presence had created in all Shiloh a profound sensation. The messenger, however, approached, and told the old man that he had come from the battlefield, and Eli asked for news. Eli was a man who loved the country which he ruled, and he had to hear that Israel had fled before the Philistines, and that there had been a great slaughter of his people. He listened in silence. Eli was a father who loved his children tenderly, if with a misguided affection, and he had to hear that his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were dead. Still he listened on in silence. Eli was a priest with his heart in the right place, a man to whom the honour of God and the interests of religion meant more, incomparably more, than anything else in the world, more than the welfare of his family, more than the welfare of his country. He had to hear that the ark of God was taken. It was too much. It came to pass that when the messenger "made mention of the ark of God, Eli fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died." This, I say, was an unpremeditated revelation of character. He might have survived the national disgrace; he might have survived the death of his children; but that the ark of the sacred presence, of which he was the appointed guardian, should be taken, this he could not survive. It touched the Divine honour, and Eli's devotion is to be measured by the fact, that the shock of such a disaster killed him on the spot.

There is, then, no question as to Eli's personal excellence, but it was accompanied by a want of moral resolution and enterprise which explains the ruin of his house. He and it were ruined "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." The original word might perhaps be better rendered. "They brought curses on themselves." They are described as sons of Belial, or in modern language as thoroughly bad men. The law of Moses gave express instructions as to the share which the priest was to have of every peace offering, and Hophni and Phinehas insisted upon taking more than the law gave them, and in taking it in a way that defeated the requirements of the law. To this high-handed avarice they added habits of personal debauchery, and thus religion fell naturally into contempt. Men abhorred the offering of the Lord. Eli knew what was going on. He said to his sons: "I hear of your evil dealings from all this people; ye make the Lord's people to transgress." Eli was not indifferent, he was not silent; he spoke to his sons in words of even calculated severity; but then he only spoke, he did not act. The scandal went on. When the ark was sent to the camp, as we have seen, it was accompanied by Hophni and Phinehas, and every Israelite knew that if Hophni continued to hold his present position he would at no distant date sit in the seat of Aaron. Eli only talked to his sons, and we can understand how he may have persuaded himself that talking was enough; that instead of taking a very painful resolution it was better to leave matters alone. If he were to do more, was there not a risk that he might forfeit the little influence over the young men that still remained to him? Would not harsh treatment defeat its object by making them desperate? Might they not attribute the most judicial severity to mere personal annoyance? If, after speaking to them, he left them alone they would think over his words. Anyhow, they would soon be older, as they grew older they would, he may have hoped, grow more sensible; they would see the imprudence, the impropriety, as well as the graver aspects, of their conduct; they would anticipate the need of action on their father's part by such a reformation of their manners as would hush the murmurs and allay the discontent of Israel. And even if this could not be calculated on very seriously, something might occur to give a new turn to their occupations. In any case, it might be better to wait and see whether matters would not in some way right themselves. This is what

weak people do. They escape, as they think, from the call of unwelcome duty, from the duty of unwelcome action, by stretching out the eyes of their mind towards some very vague future, charged with all sorts of airy improbabilities. They call it "the chapter of accidents;" they trust for relief from their present embarrassments to the chapter of accidents. My brethren, whatever appearances may say, there is no such chapter in the book either of man's natural history, or of his religious history. Every occurrence with a label of "accident" is in reality an act of the Divine providence, only it is an act for which we find it less easy to account than are His more ordinary acts. What seems to us the most fortuitous of accidents is the issue of the most deliberate will that exists, guided by infinite wisdom and infinite love, and if we, you and I, are consciously at issue with that wisdom and that love, we are playing desperate tricks with ourselves if we dream that anything can happen that will really relieve us. If Eli had not been blinded by his misplaced affection for his children, he would have known that outward circumstances do not improve those whose wills are already on a wrong moral tack, and that there is no truth whatever in the assumption that because we are getting older, we are therefore, somehow, necessarily getting better. Years may only bring with them a harder heart and a more blunted conscience. The experience of life may make men cynical even more easily than it may make them wise; and they who in youth have refused to hear Moses and the prophets, are not in after life likely to be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. Nothing but an inward change, a change of will, and character, and purpose, could possibly have saved Hophni and Phinehas, and this change was, to say the least, more probable if they could have ceased to hold the offices which meant for them only every day they held them deepening guilt and ever accumulating profanation. There is a bitter epigram—bitter, but seemingly true—that more evil is done in the world by weak men than by wicked men. Downright wickedness rouses opposition; something, others feel, must be done, if anything can be done, to put it down; but weakness saunters through the world arm in arm with some form of goodness, and men put up with its failures out of consideration to the good company that it keeps. Had it not been for the excellence of Eli's personal character, Israel would have risen in indignation to chase the young profaners of the sacred priesthood from

the precincts of the sanctuary; but Eli's sons could not be treated as common criminals, and Eli failed to do for his God, for his religion, for his country, that which he only could do, if the law of God's just judgments was not to take effect. Eli's sin consisted precisely in this: he did not restrain his sons. He ought to have removed them, as he could have removed them, from the offices which they dishonoured. Instead of that he only talked to them. His sin certainly was a sin of omission; it did not debase his personal character, it did not make himself proud or rebellious, or even ungodly, but it involved the misery of his country, the discredit of the religion over which he presided, the dishonour of his God. "Thou honourest thy sons more than Me." That was how the nameless prophet, speaking in the name of the Lord, described to Eli himself Eli's sin. It was a sort of sin of which only an amiable man could be guilty; but, for all that, in its consequences it was fatal.

Let us make two observations in conclusion. It is said that a refined civilisation brings with it increased softness of manners and a corresponding weakening of human character, and this, it is urged, is to be seen in public as well as in private life; but it is especially observable in the modern relations that exist between parents and children. Fifty years ago the English father was king in his household. He was approached with a kind of distant respect; he was loved, but he was feared as much as he was loved; his will was law, and he did not scruple to enforce it. Now, many a family is virtually a little republic, which assigns to the parents a sort of decorative leadership, but in which the young people, in virtue sometimes of their numbers, sometimes of their boisterous spirits, really rule. Those who know most of the change can tell us whether it works well, and especially whether fathers who have failed to assert their true authority are rewarded by the priceless gift of dutiful and high-minded sons. It may be that two generations back the relations between parents and children erred on the side of stiffness and severity. Is it certain that we in our day do not err on the side of good-natured indifference to plain moral obligations? Brethren, be sure of this—that if manners may change, natural relationships and their accompanying obligations are always the same. No relationship can be more charged with responsibility than that between a parent and the immortal being to whom he has been the means of giving life. Nothing that we can enact by law, nothing that

we can change by custom can cancel, or weaken, or modify a father's duty to do his utmost for the moral as well as the material, for the eternal much more than the temporal interests of his child. That greatest of all human responsibilities lives, and whether it be recognised by this or that passing generation or not, on its neglect or discharge depends the well-being of a soul, or thousands of souls, in time and in eternity. It may be that two generations ago the relations between fathers and sons were wanting in geniality, that they were stiff, that they were formal; but let us ask ourselves this question: Is it better, when a father has gone to his account, that his son should say of him: "My father kept me in strict order, but he never knowingly let me do any wrong that he could prevent," or that he should say, as sons have said: "My father was the most kindly and easy-going of men; but he never helped me to keep out of troubles which, alas! will not be buried in my grave"?

And, lastly, let us note that no outward circumstances can of themselves protect us against the insidious assaults of evil or against the enfeeblement of a truant will. If Hophni and Phinehas could have led honest and pure lives anywhere, it surely would have been on the steps of the sanctuary at Shiloh; if anywhere Eli could have felt that family affections may be so displaced as to dishonour God, and that weakness in a ruler may be criminal, he would have felt it at a spot which was so charged with the memories of the heroes and saints of Israel; but, in truth, external advantages of this kind only help us when the will and the conscience are in a condition to be helped. Shiloh in its tragic desolation, remains at this hour a monument of Eli's weakness and of his children's shame. When fourteen centuries ago that great scholar and antiquarian, St. Jerome, visited Shiloh he reported that hardly slight traces of its ruins, hardly the foundation of its sanctuaries, remained; and when ten centuries before St. Jerome saw the prophet Jeremiah, standing in the gate of Solomon's temple at Jerusalem, denouncing the sins which would speedily bring on it the ruin he predicted, what was the burden of his warning in the name of the Lord? "Go ye now unto My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of the people Israel." And what is thus recorded in the past may still be seen in the present day. That once smiling valley is now as uncultivated and bleak

as any parts of the Highlands of Scotland, with scanty ruins of what might have been a Christian church ; with deserted moss-grown tombs, a fountain once connected with the services of the tabernacle, a level piece of ground which certainly bears traces of the hand of man, and on which, it may be, the Tabernacle once stood—these are all that remain to recall its past history. Those hilly sides, once so fertile and productive, are now but rude ridges of limestone rock, here and there covered with a scanty vegetation ; that plain, once filled with all that marked a centre of national and religious life, is unvisited, unless it be now and then by some stray peasant or shepherd, or by the tents of the wandering Bedouins. We hear, indeed, of a prophet Ahijah tarrying there in the days of Jeroboam ; we hear of some heathen spoilers there for a while after the captivity of Israel ; but Shiloh remains what it became substantially soon after that dark and eventful day when the news that the ark was taken reached him, and when Eli died. In the main, it is what it has been for thirty centuries, and Jewish tradition and critical research agree in supposing that in some of the ancient rock tombs on its western side there yet rests the dust of Eli and of his sons, waiting for the last word amid the desolation which their hands had wrought. For the ruin of Shiloh is inseparably bound up with the sin and fall of the house of Eli. The ark, indeed, returned from its captivity among the Philistines—it returned, but not to Shiloh ! In familiar words, which we only understand in the light of the history which we have been considering, a later psalmist tells how Shiloh's glories passed to a new and greater sanctuary. "The Lord forsook the tabernacle in Shiloh : even the tent that He had pitched among men. He delivered their power"—that is, the ark—"into captivity, and their beauty into the enemy's hand. He gave His people over, also, unto the sword, and was wroth with His inheritance. The priests were slain with the sword, and there were no widows to make lamentation. He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, even the hill of Sion which He loved. And there He built His temple on high, and laid the foundation of it like the ground which He hath made continually." No, brethren, no outward things, no holy home, no sacred profession, no guidance of friends in the present, no saintly memories in the past can guard, still less invigorate us if, in the sanctuary of will, and conscience, that presence is absent,

that voice unheard, which will alone suffice. Except the Lord build a house of the human character their labor is but lost that build it; except the Lord keep the fortress of the human soul the watchman waketh but in vain. Yet He who lived and died that we might live will not fail us if, in will and purpose, we are true to Him—true as men who know and own their weakness. "Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart; prove me and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

A CONSECRATED THOUGHT.

BY THE REV. CANON W. J. KNOX-LITTLE,

Preached in Westminster Abbey.

I S. PETER III, 15.

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."

In that striking lesson that has been read to us for this evening's service—in that splendid appeal that the old king of Israel gave to the son who was to be the heir of his father's glory and of his father's reign, there was one great contingency upon which all the success and all the splendour of that promised reign was to turn, and that contingency was his treatment of God. In that second lesson that has been read to us to-night, in which our divine Redeemer gives us those precious pearls of thought which we have strung together, age after age, to comfort the labouring church of God, there is one underlying truth upon which all depends, and that underlying truth is, again, our treatment of God. And in the words that I have read to you for the text, the apostle Peter puts that forth in the tersest and plainest way. He is teaching people who were themselves labouring under harassing difficulties. He is talking to men and women who had to learn Christian action in the midst of a state of society that opposed that action. The special difficulties of those to whom Peter wrote were difficulties that belonged to their own time. They lived amidst a heathen population; they were subject to a state of society where, from time to time, there were ever bursting forth those fitful expressions of violent persecution that tested the mettle of the Christian soul; and, consequently, in that condition of the populations to whom the apostle wrote, there appeared to be plenty of excuses why they should not remain firm and faithful to their duty. St. Peter admits of none. He speaks of the special acts that belong to the ordinary obligations of their ordinary life. He takes every minute detail of daily duty, and he drives it home with a deter-

mination and persistence that speaks to them as if all that went on around them was not exceptional, but simply smooth. He admits no excuse, from the difficulties that were around them, for forgetting the intimate claims of duty. No such excuse was admitted then: none such, my brothers and sisters, may be admitted now.

Now, what I would ask you first to remember this evening is St. Peter's argument—his answer to these people, when they seemed to ask, "How are we to face these difficulties and to fulfil these duties?" St. Peter's answer to these people is an answer, as I say, for all here to-night—an answer to you and to me; and, therefore, I ask you first to consider—are there any special difficulties that make it incumbent upon us who preach to you to bring before you such an answer? And I say plainly—and you will agree with me—that in the age in which you and I are living, no such special difficulties occur. The age in which we are living—who can find fault with it? I suppose that you and I, children of the nineteenth century, drink in the brightness and the glory of this crowning age that comes to us in all the heritage of time. I suppose that those who do not pretend to serve the dead, but only to drink in what the dead have left us, will hardly make any wide accusations against the age in which we live. And yet, to be honest, when I speak to you in the name of Jesus, if you are to accept the answer that I am to give you to-night from the apostle as to how you can obey God's teaching and treat God well,—if you are to obey that command and take it up, then you are battling with difficulties. I will not pause for many moments over them, but I will notice them on the threshold of my subject. The age in which we are living is, without question, a materialistic age. We are so intent on what is present before us, that the material and the actual engross our minds and drive us on to selfish ends. Hence the undue value that is placed on material things. Hence—is it not true?—the keenness of money getting. Hence—is it not true?—the pompous expenditure of such a city as London. Hence—is it not true?—the great marts and exchanges of Europe have been turned, at last, into a kind of gambling houses, where men, reckless of the fortunes of their fellow creatures, in struggling after their own advancement, bring misery and degradation to many around. Hence, is it not true that, in a materialistic age, you and I find this, and more, pressing upon us? Do we not find also the pressure of pleasure—the

seeking of pleasure at all costs to others? Do you not find in London society the personal seeking of pleasure—the pretence, the affectation, the wilful selfishness that comes from a materialistic age, which makes the present everything—which makes God and His future as nothing to His creature. My brother and my sister in Jesus, honestly with you I am proud of my century; but I think you will agree with me that you and I may say for our century and say for our country, "God forgive their grandeur!" It is a difficulty if you desire to serve God.

One moment, and I will point out another. The age we live in is an age of advance; but it is a superficial age. Knowledge surely spreads wide, but knowledge hardly goes deep. Men once could brood over truth hour after hour—day after day—year after year. You and I can not do that now. We have to learn it through our literature. We have to gather it from a moment snatched here and there from the rush and the roar. We have to sit up late if we would learn. We have to end our days prematurely if we would know. The age in which we live is so superficial that we ourselves, with the best intentions, must each of us do it in the superficiality of the age. And what is the result? All the thoughts that come to you of sin and of God are superficial. Sin! You look at moral evil, and you only measure how accidental and inconvenient it is to yourself. God! You think of Him never as the Highest, but bring Him down to the bar of your own judging, asking Him to stand before you—not for what He has said, but for what He ought to say. You choose what your Creator should do, and lay down the law to Him as though He were a criminal—treat Him on equal terms, and if He will not come to terms with you, then, with the air of a well-bred man of society, bow Him out and tell Him to be gone. It is no exaggerated picture of the age that you and I are living in. Materialistic, superficial, it is therefore restless, and we are burdened with its restlessness. Change upon change—ever seeking variety, something new here and there must be brought to us,—unscrupulous criticism—careless opinion—anything for the moment to catch the ear or to catch the eye. From restlessness there comes fretfulness; from fretfulness the reaction of despondency; from despondency, to a thousand lives, the desperate darkness of despair. And so I meet young men who come to me and say, as I talk to them of God, "In this restless age—in this surge and sway and swell of ever changing

opinion, what have I to believe? What am I to do but to fall in with the sway and the swell of the age I live in? Living in it, I must drink its spirit. I am bound to bow to the spirit of the age." Yes, my brother, my sister, you and I are children of the nineteenth century, and thank God for it; but as we are children of the nineteenth century, we must drink in the spirit of the age. We are, therefore, in danger from the materialistic age that comes to us. We are in danger, also, from its shallowness and restlessness. We are in danger of a false idea of sin and of God and of ourselves. We have difficulties—difficulties as great or greater than those of the old Christians. "How shall I answer them—how meet them—how?" ask you who are in earnest to-night, if one thought or earnest prayer has sprung up, out of the list of evil, to meet the case, towards the ear of the living God.

There is one answer to be given—one answer in this age. In such an age it seems to me needful to again and again reiterate that it is not what we do or what we learn—that it is not our activity which will tell on the world around us. It is simply what we are; and if that be true, oh, then, recollect that the greatness, the grandeur, the truth, the splendor, the glory, the beauty of your life are conditioned by this. They depend on your falling in with the true conditions that are before you. They depend upon your treatment of God. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." That is the answer. Will you with me, to-night, for a few moments more, examine and measure its meaning? "Sanctify the Lord God."

The great answer to be given to the age is this—the sanctification in the heart of the creature of the living God. "The living God!" Oh, when I say that name, and make it ring through the arches of this old cathedral, there seem to come echoing back, from the past and from the present, the cries—"What?" and "Where?" "Who is He?" "What is He?" "Where is He to be found?" As they ask in the first age they ask in this age. "Where—where shall I find Him?" The old French Voltairian asked it, and he sneered away the answer. A workman in London, a year or two ago, asked it of me in a garret where he worked, and turned and said, as I spoke to him of God, that divines were so apologizing for their God that he preferred the theory of Voltaire. Augustin asked it long ago. He went out to the sea; he went out to the sky. Looking over the wild waves, he cried, "Are you my God?"

Looking up to the deep blue sky, he cried, "Are you my God?" Looking to the stars that gleamed in that sky he asked the question; and the answer that rang to him from the three was, "Above us! Above us!" Oh, mark the difference between him and the workman—the difference between that old French sceptic and the Christian father. The one sneered away the answer; the other had begun to seek.

Do you ask me what I mean by sanctifying the Lord God? Then I answer, first of all, by seeking to know, if you do not know. Let us go a step farther, if I explain the answer clearly. Seek: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." What is that?

I answer, then, first and clearly, it is that your life shall come under the power of a consecrated thought. Do you know what I mean by a consecrated thought? Yes, father, mother, brother, sister, you know it, if you have within you the heart of man or woman. You know it as I know it. In moments of peril and doubt and darkness and danger, the thought of one we love—the thought of the mother at home who would grieve if we dishonoured her—the thought of the wife and child whom we love with our warmest affection, has stayed the hand as it was going to strike—has locked the tongue when it would speak untruth. And that thought of blessed affection, my brothers and sisters, is a consecrated thought. Or take for a moment the case of nations. You and I have read those noble stories in Grecian history when we were boys at school long ago. You know the mountains of Marathon, and the broad sweep of the blue Ægean, and the stately peaks of the hills of Greece; and you remember that brave band that, standing below, contested the pass with the multitudinous invaders, and that it was not merely glory which they were seeking, but that the power which urged them on to victory was the power of country and the power of liberty. It was the force of a consecrated thought. I might say the same of scenes which are more distinctly religious. I will only mention two. Down in the depths of the Jordan valley—down in the hot stretch of land which lies around the Dead Sea, where the ancient cities that sinned unnaturally against the God that made them were overwhelmed with fierce destruction—down in that region of heat and terror, a great missionary probably met his end. You remember what a striking end it was—the end of the Baptist. You remember how the dancing girl, dancing before the wicked monarch, succeeded in wringing from him

the priceless treasure of that heart that had dreamed and thought and meditated on God. Oh, down there in that deep dungeon, when they came to end his mission—not amid the excitement of public trial—not before crowds of enthusiastic listeners—not before those who had been stirred by his words, and who would stand for his life, but alone in the darkness, he died. And how? Supported by a consecrated thought.

But there is one scene more dear to me than the Jordan valley—dearer than the Dead Sea shore. "The mountains stand about Jerusalem;" and as they stand about Jerusalem they tell me of one spot of ground, about the exact[illegible] of which [illegible] may dispute and archæologists may wrangle; but the Christian knows that there, somewhere or other, is Calvary. On Calvary, on that great day which you and I, believing or unbelieving, can never dare to ignore—on Calvary there once hung up, on that instrument of agony, the Man of Sorrow and your divine R[illegible]—the Saviour who [illegible] you, my brother—the one whose love has embraced you if you have known anything of God. And, hanging there, what was it that bore Him up? What was it that sustained Him in His anguish? "For the joy that was set before Him"—the joy of my redemption—the joy of doing God's will—the joy of extending His glory—"for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame." And what was it that fired my Redeemer? What was it that enabled Him to bear all that sin? What was it that strengthened Him in that last bitter moment? It was the power of a consecrated thought. He thought of God, and of the creature that was to be brought near God. They looked upon that scene. They thought it was all over with Him. They called it defeat. I look at the power of that consecrated thought which bore my Redeemer up in His agony; if they call it defeat, I call it victory. My friends, in order to win a moral victory you need the power of a consecrated thought. You need to [illegible] thought and put it in your mind by means of consecration. What is that? To sanctify is to put apart from common uses. To sanctify is to set apart of your own free choice. To sanctify is not only to set apart in that way, but to set apart supremely, as being above all other things in this world. Now, the power of victory for you and for me in an age materialistic, superficial, and restless is to consecrate and set apart, by our own free choice, with the assistance of the divine Comforter, the greatest thought that ever

crossed the brains of humanity—the thought of whom, but the living God? "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."

May I for a moment point out to you how I would ask you to sanctify? You have the consecrated thought of God. Well, my friends, go back to the beginning of your existence. Go back to the first days in which you lived—when first you began to be conscious of anything. You were conscious that you came into a world which you did not make, and you were conscious that you yourself were not made by yourself; and whatever after arguments you have used—however you have philosophized—however you otherwise you have been, you are conscious of a living inner consciousness that above you there was a Creator to whom you owed your existence. My friend, act like the creature. Stand as a creature should stand. Lying in the hand of your Creator, act in a creaturely spirit. What is that? It means the government of the life by truth, or, in Christian words, it means humility; and when you act creaturely, and when you recollect always your Creator and are humble, you are sanctifying the Lord God.

Or this explains it more clearly. You realize your existence, but you realize something more. You realize that you have a Father—a Father, perhaps, of whom you knew little when you were a child; but as you grew older He directed your steps. You were conscious that there was one above you to whom you owed obedience—one whom you could trust above your earthly father. And when you rose from that thought you went up at once to manhood, and you said, "Oh, not Creator only! Oh, not the one that formed me; but a name that is dearer than 'Creator'—'Our Father which is in heaven.' I know a Father's love." You know something beyond. Your father carried you back to the years before you. There was another who stood by his side and taught you. You were laid upon your mother's knee. She gazed upon you with eyes that taught you a lesson which the cold world has never envied you; and as you learned that lesson, then, indeed, you began to realize immortality—to recognize a sympathetic tenderness for Him who was above you. Or, my brothers and sisters, perhaps you learned without the plain teaching of the church of God. You learned the love of God in Christ. Perhaps you learned it by knowing none of this. Perhaps I speak to those who never knew a father's care—who never knew a mother's love. But it

you did not, then, at least, you may remember that there is one above who fills the place. Do you know the thought in you of a living God—of the Creator in whose hand I have to lie—of the Father who loves me and longs for me—of the Father whose love is manifested in the face of Jesus—a love of sympathetic tenderness—of manly because of divine regard?

Take that thought, brother. Have you taken it? Do you love God? Have you thought of God? Are you trying to obey God? Is the first question to yourself, "Is it popular? Is it pleasurable?" or "Is it right?" Is your first question to yourself, "Is it my duty? Does my God desire it?" Oh, take that thought. It is a beginning. Place it in your heart; never forget it; and it will bear you through many a difficulty—the consecrated thought.

For one moment I would remind you that there is a further step than simply consecrating that thought—the thought of God. You do not act, when you sanctify the Lord God, only under the power of a consecrated thought: you act under the power of a solemn fear. Yes, do not start when I say it after I have spoken of the loving God. You act under the power of a solemn fear, if you are to meet the difficulties of life with this precept that the apostle gives you. God and you are alone: you stand face to face with Him. In another few minutes this crowd will melt away as if it had been a dream. I shall remember that I have spoken to you whom I have not known here except in Christ. But shall I be alone? Shall you? Oh, no! Face to face with God—looking straight to Him—I, such as I am—you, such as you are. Whenever we go, there He is, and in a real sense we are with Him, with a memory laden with sin—with a will, perhaps, bent in weakness—with a mind and intelligence that would have employed it in vilifying or denying its Creator. Whatever sins we have—sins which we have called light because, alas! they are so common—whatever they are, we stand face to face when we are alone with our Creator, and the moment comes when we wake up to the thought. Have you awakened up to it? Do you know that you are alone with God wherever you are? Whether you are in the theatre, in the church, in the ball-room, in the office, on the exchange, in the great parliament house here—everywhere—in the street, in the room at home, in the social circle, in the great public meeting—you are alone in all its reality—alone with God. Oh, do you

know that solemn thought? Then I will interpret that thought. If you do, mark this. The moment that you woke up to it was a consecrated moment. The book which spoke to you that truth and from which you learned it—you loved that book. The voice that rang through it and first brought it home to you was the voice that falls from heaven. You and I, my brother, remember the time—perhaps the moment—perhaps the gradual days—when we woke up to that solemn fear. And would we part with that fear? Would we give it away? No, no. When the great massacres of the Christians occurred some ten or twelve years ago, an Arab lad was lying on the ground with the executioner standing over him; and the lad had so learned to love whatever his mother had spoken to him, that the echo of her dying voice, as she was cut down by the wretch's sabre, rang in his ears, and enabled him to cry out, hardly knowing what he said, "No, no, I shall never depart from the message that she has given to me. I will die for Jesus first." We would be like that Arab lad. Though they spared his life, yet by the mere act of loving thought in that critical moment, he had witnessed for God. Oh, cling to that solemn feeling. If you know what it is to be afraid to sin against God, oh, think of it in your rooms and do not be afraid or ashamed of that feeling. Wherever you are—in the drawing-room, in the parlour, in the church, in the mart, in the theatre, or in the street, oh, do not be ashamed to say, "I am afraid to do this and sin against my God." That fear of God—that solemn fear—is holy: it is sanctifying the Lord God.

I will not weary you, but one point more. This sanctification is to be under the power of a consecrated thought: it is to be under the power of a solemn fear. Oh, my brother, my sister, shall I stop there? It is to be under the power of a sublime devotion. That is possible since Calvary. That is possible since the Redeemer lived and died. Listen to the voice which says that man has ever lived to wake up at last to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the splendour of the life and death of Christ, and if you do, I defy you, if you have the heart of a man or woman—it may be with restless emotion—it may be in the quietness of a calm nature—it may be by energetic endeavour—it may be in the quiet circle of home—but I defy you not to offer at the feet of that magnificent, that glorious life of Jesus, the homage, the devotion, the adoration that comes from the

Christian when he faces the man of men. And oh, my brothers and sisters, to give Him that devotion—to concentrate the will and the affections, the memory, the powers of understanding upon one object,—to make that one object *the* object of life—to refuse to deny one word that He has said—to determine to witness to every syllable that He has spoken—to witness for Him not by word, but by imitation—to witness for Him not by imitation only, but by the divine impress—by an ardent affection—to do that to Jesus our Redeemer is to sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. My brother, my sister, will it carry you over? Will it meet the materialistic age? Will it meet the restlessness of your time? Will it make you brave instead of cowardly? Will it make you pure instead of lustful? Will it make you determined instead of weak? Will it make you unworldly instead of worldly? It will, it will by the power of the divine impress. Sanctify in your heart the living God.

A question: Will you do it? Will you do it? Oh, my brother, you old Christian who have long lived for Christ, you answer, "I have done it, blessed be God." Oh, my dear young brother,—you in the temptations of this great, loud, noisy, wicked, glorious London—will you do it? You will have to give up many a pleasure. You will have to give up applause, and you must bear to be in the minority. But will you do it? Will you consecrate the Lord God in your heart? Blessed! blessed! if you will. A question that lies upon that question: Do you love God? Oh, my brother or sister, wherever you are, listen to that voice and answer it quietly to-night on your knees. Do you love God? A brother clergyman told me the other day that a man of the world got into a train on the North Western Railway; and there was in the carriage a little girl, and, playing with her, was her mother. Presently this man of the world was astonished by the little girl looking up at him and saying, "Do you love God?" "Do I love God?" said he. He asked the question of himself in prayer. He asked himself the question in the drawing-room. He asked it when he went to his club. It rang in his ears, and at last it had this effect: "And if I do not," he said, "what else is there to love?" You love your wife, your child, your brother, your sister; where did that love come from? The rushing rivers rush through the plain down to the sea; but they cannot rise above their source. That love and affection which you have for your wife, your

daughter, your brother, your sister, your husband, your friend,—where did it come from? It came from that reservoir of love. It came from that fountain in the mountains of prayer. Oh, if you have learned that lesson, learn the other." "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts:" love your God.

Well, there are crises in life when such a lesson is wanted, and when it will stand us in good stead. Before I close to-night, may I mention those to you. I will mention three crises in life, and then I have done. Now, believe me I mark my words. [illegible] in those congregation who can miss those crises.

There is the crisis of darkness. Darkness comes upon us all. It may be the darkness of doubt. It may be the moment when faith is failing. It may be the wonder whether any of it is true—whether it is all a dream. Some of us have known that: some of us may yet know it—the moment when we have trusted first one thing and then another, and each has given way. At last, what have we stood upon? Oh, woe be to us if we [illegible] that last thought—[illegible] crucified in our hearts—the thought of God. It stays you in the darkness of doubt, and you may climb by it into faith. There is the darkness of dishonour. You have loved friends, and they have failed you. They have misunderstood you—misconstrued you—calumniated you. Oh, blessed if you are holding the big hand of God. Blessed if you have learned, as he of old, to consecrate that thought in your hearts! There is the darkness of sorrow. You have loved some on earth, and they have gone—some who were dearer to you than your own soul, and their voices come to you across the chasm of death. With soft eyes and loving hands they come to you, but you do not hear the voices. Those voices rang to you; those eyes answered back to yours; those hands clasped yours, and told you by the clasp that God was love. They are gone now, and you can not speak to them—gone, and your will [illegible] in, and your very brain reels at the mystery of death. What will you hold by? You and I have loved and lost; what will we hold by? Thank God, the voice of the risen Jesus came across the chasm of death. We have learned to sanctify the Lord God.

There is the crisis of conflict. It may come to you to-night. It might have come last night. It will come to you some day—the crisis when desire meets law—the crisis when God's law is in its death struggle with

the desire of man. The foes are gathering round ; the clang of arms is heard ; there is the rush and the cry of battle. Oh, raise the eye ! oh, beat down the foe ! oh, resist the dishonesty ! oh, trample the untruth under foot ! Oh, look up ! look up ! and cry to Him ! Consecrate the Lord God in your hearts, and, believe me, there will ring back the cry of victory.

And then there is the last crisis of all—the crisis of death. This abbey floor to me is a striking sight to-night. I see the upturned faces of a thousand men and women listening to what message I have to give from my God. And then I think, as I said before, this place will be, in a few hours dark for the night. All will have left here then. These monuments that line the walls of this [illegible] reared by the Confessor to bear the name of God, speak, some of them, the history of men who have led England's armies on to victory—speak, some of them, of men whose only glory was their intellect—speak, some of them, of those who have been dear and blessed souls—whose lives were so full of beauty and benediction that it was difficult to believe that they could die. And as we gaze upon them they bring once more the feet of the living there. And when you and I, for one instant, stand face to face with the solemn reality of death, one truth governs our thought : one power governs our mind : what is it ? Change upon change : change upon change. All is vanishing : all is past. The world and the glory of it is passing away. All goes like the drying leaf of time. Oh, no, my brother. The thought of love, the act of faith, the voice of friends, the earnest witness, the solemn love for God [illegible] these will not die. When death comes there is one platform on which you and I can plant our feet. It is not the trifles that make up our life ; it is the thought—the broad—the splendid [illegible] thought, which moved us to penitence—which moved us to penitence, and therefore to pardon—which moved us to pardon, and therefore to love. It was the thought of the living God. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." Remember in all vicissitudes to think of Him. It is something to fear His law : to love Him is benediction, and it will conquer the forces of the enemy, and it will end in the cry of victory. It will be good for yourself ; it will be good for those around you. It will make you not philanthropic merely, but Christian. It will make you not merely devoted to the affairs of duty, but devoted to the things of God. It will be to you a sceptre of bene-

diction. Oh, if every soul in this cathedral to-night would resolve that God should be sanctified at once in their hearts, what a blessing for this great world! Oh, my brothers and sisters, try to do it, God being with you. Look to His face: stretch your arms up to Him, and He will reach out His hands to you—to-night, ere the echoes of my voice have done [illegible] in this steady cathedral air—to-night, and say, "My God, my glory shall be in Christ Jesus." Then be with Him in battle, in darkness, in sorrow—with Him unto everlasting victory.

JOB'S REPENTANCE.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN VAUGHAN, D. D.

Preached in the Temple Church.

JOB XLII, 5, 6.

"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

WONDERFUL in many respects, this book is wonderful not least in its doctrine of repentance. The scene of the book is laid outside Palestine. It belongs to a world not under law. There is not a phrase nor an idea throughout it of ceremony or of sacrifice, of written precept or sacerdotal institution. Whatever may have been the date or the age of its composition, the chief actor and his surroundings evidently belong to the patriarchal period. They represent man and his relations with God as they were in the age between Adam and Moses, between the fall and the giving of the law, as they were, for example, for Abraham and for Melchisedek, while life was still lived, so to say, under the open sky, and all the problems of human existence were presented in those simplest forms of unhindered doing and suffering which were not yet complicated by ritual and traditions, by political institutions or conventionalisms of society.

The great subject of the book is the mystery of suffering; but in that aspect it is for us the least difficult of all its aspects—its infliction upon righteous and holy persons whom we know that it comes upon to discipline into a higher excellence, and in whose case we know it will so soon be compensated by a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Such explanations were not for an age prior to the bringing "of life and immortality to light by the gospel," an age which had little beyond a guess and an instinct to serve as counterpoise to the weight of things seen and temporal, and which could scarcely fail to confuse the two

ideas of chastisement and judgment, of remedial and penal, and to draw inferences either of injustice on the part of the afflicter, or else of exceptional depravity in the sufferer.

Both these inferences are drawn in the long dialogues which form the heart of this book. The three friends exhaust themselves in inferring sin from suffering; while the sufferer justly asserts the cruelty and the falsehood of that argument, and falls himself into the other and not less dangerous fallacy of arraigning the Providence which confounds in one promiscuous calamity the righteous and the wicked.

There is much that is distinctive, necessarily in the disentanglement of those perplexities in a book and in a history of so remote an antiquity.

The intervention of the Deity in the magnificent last act of the drama is an intervention rather of majesty than of explanation. To our conception, arguments from the creatorship of a behemoth or a leviathan leave the mystery of the personal dealing much where it was, and would rather silence than satisfy the self-torturing questions of the sufferer.

But in the revelation of God in any one of His attributes, in the manifestations of the fountain of being in any form of reality, lies the germ at least of all satisfaction and of all comfort. "Acquaint thyself with Him, and be at peace," is a maxim of truth, even if Eliphaz the Temanite speaks it, or if the acquaintance spoken of be but with the outermost fringe of His robe of light, the omnipotence, or the omniscience, or the omnipresence, not the philanthropy, and not the love. "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

The chief character in this drama is represented as one of singular piety. The first verse of the book describes him as "perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil." The historical setting of the piece is a fruitless endeavor on the part of the great adversary to prove the perfectness of the character to be nothing more than a disguised selfishness. "Doth Job fear God for naught?" is his question. "Put forth now Thine hand" is the suggestion, "and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face."

It is done. Everything that he has is stripped from him. A great

wind from the wilderness smites the home. He is left childless as well as destitute. Yet in all this "he sins not nor charges God foolishly."

Again the slanderer speaks and proposes a more crucial experiment: "Touch his bone, and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face." This, too, is done. In his own home he is tempted: "Curse God and die." But all still is vain. "What!" he says, "shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "In all this did not Job sin, even with his lips."

In the onward course of the dialogue we can find, as it has been said, much to disappoint us and much to displease. But it is remarkable that even here we are not called to emphasise or to accentuate the error. At the close of all it is said to the three friends: "Ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath." "My servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept." It seems as though we had in this comparison a gleam from "the excellent glory," of a gospel not yet revealed, telling how God is more dishonored by a breach of charity than even by a breach of piety, more by the suspicion which would detect sin in the godly than by the reflection of a sorely tried sufferer even upon the justice of God Himself. At all events, the point and moral of the book does not lie in the sinfulness of the chief actor. The vindication and triumph of his integrity amidst suffering pushed to the uttermost, loss, grief, and pain, severity, suspicion and misconception, heaven as brass above him, an earth as iron below, this is the real issue; all else is subordinated to this main point, the beautiful and glorious steadfastness of the godly man under temptation, tried in a furnace seven times heated, and brought out from it unto praise and honour and glory.

If all this was so, how shall we read and how interpret the words of the text itself, which speak of a self-abhorrence, a repentance in dust and ashes, on the part of one whom God is delighted to honour, of one whose intercession God declares to be prevalent for others less worthy than himself.

It might be suggested, and we will think of it for one moment, that the thing which God accepted in Job, and looked for in vain from his friends, was the very utterance of the text, this self-abasement, and self-abhorrence, [illegible] the general course and tenor of the long dialogues which form the bulk of the book. Job, it

might be said, has now humbled himself for the ignorance and presumption of his speeches, provoked from him by the cruel aspersions of his visitors, but none the less derogatory to the goodness and justice of God. They had not done this; they had not made this amend, and they had equal or greater offence. I do not think that this suggestion will commend itself, if for no other reason, because the clause which immediately follows the text is not after Job had thus spoken to the Lord; but after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, carrying us back to the discourse which preceded the confession, and so to the long dialogues themselves, of which that discourse is the close.

But this question will not very materially affect the connection of the text with that which is our subject. The text carries us from the godly, or Godward sorrow which worketh repentance, to that repentance itself which is unto salvation, and not to be repented of. And the first thought which will come to us from the text is that of *the very narrow and limited view commonly taken of repentance;* as though, if not exactly the same thing as sorrow, yet at all events it is co-extensive with it in the compass of its retrospect; as though repentance were either a regretful and sorrowful backward look upon some particular sin or sins, standing out isolated and alone, in nearer or further remembrance; or at best an altered mind towards that particular kind and shape of sinning. So that repentance itself would be altogether incongruous or morbid for one who had no such particular memory of transgression, and could belong only to a certain portion and section of human beings, penitents, commonly so called, with the definite stigma (shame be upon us for it !) attaching to the name.

Now the text, uttered, as it is uttered, by a tried saint and servant of God, shows the miserable narrowness and ignorance of such a view.

Brethren, repentance is not the necessity of some; it is the necessity of all. Repentance is not the one hope and the one chance of a certain number of persons who have sinned very definitely and very shamefully, and who now, by great efforts and under the special discipline perhaps of reformatories and penitentiaries, must acquire a new dread and hatred of certain particular sins, and wear henceforth the mortified look of brands plucked from the burning; repentance is one of two Christian graces, elementary in one sense, but permanent in

another, characteristic not of any particular experience, but of all possible experience [illegible] having a side and a shape for every single Christian, a grace which is the very voice and mind of the being saved by God's mercy, the very heart and soul of the being that shall enter and inhabit heaven.

Repentance is not an act, but a *state;* not a feeling, but a *disposition;* not a thought, but a *mind.* Certainly in most men, probably in all men, if we knew all, repentance has a deep tinge in it of regretful recollection. Where is he who has not behind him some painful and shameful incidents haunting the memory and dogging the onward steps of the life? Repentance in that man takes account of these things, probably began with the [illegible] with [illegible] ing. Repentance is too real a grace to live in the ideal. Finding these things in existence, it notices and it deals with them. They are the salient features, the prominent forms in its retrospects and its reminiscences. But repentance would equally have place, if there were none such. The utterer of the words before us, "I abhor myself," had no such objects behind him. He was perfect and upright. He was one who had always feared God and always eschewed evil. The worst things he had behind him were a few rash and unadvised words wrung from him not by impatience of suffering, but by provoking arguments and cruel imputations. Repentance was his, but not, in common parlance, penitence. No pious friends, no charitable institution, would have seen in him a proper object for reproof, or for reformation. When he said, "I repent in dust and ashes," he spoke of something not betrayed in acts of sinning, but belonging to that innermost being, with which no stranger can intermeddle.

Let us say yet a word or two on this repentance, let us try to form an idea of it as the sister grace of faith, as the very essence of reality and self-knowledge, as the very condition and groundwork of true everlasting happiness. Of course, if there are sins in sight, past or present, repentance begins with these. It is of the nature of repentance to be quick-sighted and quick-souled and quick-conscienced; she cannot dwell complacently with evil, be it but in memory. But she goes, far deeper than any particular exhibition or ebullition of evil.

Repentance is the consciousness not of sins, but of sin, the consciousness of [illegible] the [illegible] of all sinning. The new mind,

the after mind, according to the Greek word for repentance, is the mind which eschews the fallen state, the taint and bias of evil, which is what we mean, or ought to mean, by original sin, that undefinable, impalpable something which infects the very being, which spoils and corrupts our best natural impulses, and makes us feel that in us "dwells no good thing," that even when the good-will is present the performance cannot be depended upon. And thus a deep, pervading humility, a lowly self-estimate, what our Lord speaks of as a "poverty of spirit," takes a possession not to be disturbed of the very thought and soul of the man.

This is one part of the grace. It prevents the good man, the godly man, the man who is [illegible] and not found wanting, from ever forgetting what he is in himself, and how alone he stands. It is no exaggeration and no hypocrisy in him to say, "I abhor myself." For that does not mean an indolent letting alone, as of a nature that cannot be amended, and for which an ideal or imaginary nature must be substituted. It means a consciousness real and abiding, of a need and a want for which God has made provision in His Son and in His Spirit, and of the impossibility of ever forgetting the promise, which is also the one hope, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

There is another and most important thought left in the text, and it is the connection of repentance with what is here called the sight of God, and contrasted with another thing which is called the hearing of God by the hearing of the ear. The great drama of which this is the closing scene, being scripture, does not of course present God Himself in visible form on the stage. The Lord, it is said, answered Job out of the whirlwind, he did not see Him. Twice repeated are those words, and they give the account of the manifestation, what it was and was not. We are not, therefore, to dream of any literal sight. "No man hath seen God at any time." The point, therefore, is a figurative contrast between hearing of and seeing. The former is a hearer hearing; the latter is a direct communication, like that face to face vision, which has nothing [illegible] looked upon.

In literal fact the communication was in this case a hearing with the ear; the communication was a hearing, but it was a *hearing*, and not a hearing *of*; and that makes all the difference. The personal presence was felt. The thing heard was a voice—not a sound, but a voice; the

thing said was a realised thing. And inasmuch as the presence was God's presence, and the voice was God's voice, and the thing realised was God's being, the result was that described. The creature, fallen and sinful, felt itself to be such; compared itself with the All-Holy, felt its vanity, its vileness, its essential nothingness. And this is the changed, the new, the after mind. This is repentance. Till now the thing formed was able to say to Him that formed him: "Why hast Thou made me thus?" why hast Thou thus dealt with me?—could challenge the equity of the Divine dealing; could say, like the first sinner, "the woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she was my tempter;" or with the second sinner, "Am I my brother's keeper?" or with the later and latest sinners, "How should God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?" "Now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Brethren, the experience spoken of is always the turning point between the two kinds of repentance. We have all heard of God by the hearing of the ear. There is a sound about Him in the ears of all of us, echoing correct doctrine as to the being of a God, as to His insight into hearts, as to His moral character and future judgment. We hear of Him. We place this among other pieces of knowledge; we can repeat it; we can talk of it; we can even hand it on. When we have sinned we have an uneasy conscience by reason of this tradition about God; we wish that we had not sinned; we resolve that we will sin no more. This is what we may call, borrowing from St. Paul's language, the world's repentance. The world has heard of God by the hearing of the ear. The Godward sorrow, before it reaches repentance, has had another experience. It has seen God; it has realised the Invisible.

Brethren, many religious teachers counsel a treatment of sin which looks quite another way. They bid the man to scrutinise and analyse the sin, to count and number his particular transgressions, to dwell always even upon and amongst them, to give himself no peace, and to ask for no mercy, till he has thoroughly seen himself as he is, and can plead a ready-made repentance at the footstool of grace. Is this the teaching before us? Does not this text say rather, Make straight paths for your feet to the Throne of Grace; try to get one glimpse, if it be but one, of Him who sits thereon—Father, Saviour, and Comforter.

Before you can abhor yourself you must see Him. Before you can repent in dust and ashes, you must hear Him say to you, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Then first will the new mind begin to form itself, when you have caught your first glimpse of the love which made atonement, and through it of the holiness which spared not itself from death, yea, the death of the Cross, for you. There is "a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." Plunge whole into that fountain, not one piece or part of you; wash not one by one the separate sins, but bathe the whole soul in the laver of the atoning blood. Then first you will see sin, all sin and each sin in its true character. The Godward sorrow will grow with each access to the God who breathes it, and repentance itself will be seen as the gift of gifts, foretaste of heaven below, and atmosphere of heaven above.

A NATION'S CURSE.

BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

Preached in Westminster Abbey at the 21st Anniversary of the Church of England Temperance Society.

DEUT. XI. 26.

"Behold, I set before you a blessing and a curse."

IT is with deliberate purpose that I mean the sermon this evening to be almost exclusively a plain statement of plain facts. I wish it to be an appeal, not to the imagination, not to the emotions, but to the reason, to the sense of duty, to the conscience of Christians in a Christian land. If I say one word that is not true, I am guilty; if I consciously exaggerate a single argument, I am morally responsible; if I do so from ignorance, or from mistaken evidence, I hail any possible refutation of what I urge as a service to the sacred cause of truth. But if the facts be facts, indisputable, and for the most part even undisputed, and then if they do not speak to you for themselves, I know nothing else that can or will. If they do not carry with them their own fire; if they do not plead with you, clear as a voice from Sinai, in their barest and briefest reality, and spur you to seek redress—

> "If not the face of men,
> The sufferance of our souls, the times' abuse,
> If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
> And every man home to his idle bed."

Those who plead for temperance reform are daily charged with exaggeration. Exaggeration is never right, never wise, even when moral indignation renders it excusable; but before you repeat that hackneyed and irrelevant charge, remember that there never was prophet or reformer yet, since time began, against whom the same charge has not been made. We have no need to exaggerate; our cause is overwhelmingly strong in its moral appeal to unvarnished realities, and we have nothing to do but to set forth things as they are, till not only the serious

and the earnest, but even the comfortable, even the callous, yes, even the careless and the selfish—unless they are content to forego altogether the name of patriot and the name of Christian—shall be compelled to note them for very shame.

1. Begin, then, with the fact that the direct expenditure of the nation on intoxicating drinks is reckoned at £130,000,000 a year, and the indirect, which we are forced to pay from the results of drunkenness, £100,000,000 more. Maintain, if you will, that alcohol is a harmless luxury, you still cannot deny that for the vast majority it is not a necessity. Whole races of men, the votaries of whole religions, do without it, and gain by its absence. From [illegible] prisoners in England it is cut off from the day of their imprisonment, and they are not the worse, but the stronger and the healthier from its withdrawal. There are some five million total abstainers in England, and the impartial statistics of insurance prove conclusively that longevity is increased by abstention from strong drink. The most gigantic feats of strength and endurance of which mankind has ever heard have been achieved without it. At the very best, then, it is a luxury. If it were not so, three Chancellors of the Exchequer would not have congratulated the nation on the diminution of revenue drawn from the sale of it; nor would a speech from the throne have expressed satisfaction at this loss of income. Being, then, at the best a luxury, even if no harm came from it, I ask you seriously, whether we can, in these days, bear the exhaustion which arises from this terrible drain on our national resources? We live in anxious times. The pressure of life, its intensity of competition, both in the nation itself and with other nations, is very severe. Of late two daily newspapers have been filled with correspondence which proves the state of middle class society. One has given expression to the sorrows and struggles of thousands of clerks in our [illegible] and has told the dismal story of their hopeless and grinding poverty. The other has revealed with what agonies of [illegible] parents contemplate the difficulty of starting their sons in the crowded race in life. Can there be the shadow of a doubt that the nation would be better prepared for the vast growth of its population, and that the condition of average life would be less burdensome if we abandoned a needless, and, therefore a wasteful, expenditure. Would not the position of England be more secure if that vast river of wasted gold were diverted into more

fruitful channels?—if the 88½ millions of bushels of grain (as much as is produced in all Scotland) which are now mashed into deleterious drink, were turned into useful food? If the 69 thousand of acres of good land now devoted to hops were used for cereals? If England were relieved from the burden of supporting the mass of misery, crime, pauperism and madness which drunkenness entails? Even in this respect, as Sir Matthew Hale said two centuries ago, "*perimus licitis*, we are perishing by permitted things." A Chinese tradition tells us that when, 4,000 years ago, the Emperor forbade the use of intoxicants, heaven rained gold for three days. Looking at the matter on grounds simply economical—considering only the fact that the working classes drink, in grossly adulterated beers and maddening spirits, as much as they pay in rent—considering that there is hardly a pauper in England who has not wasted on intoxicants enough to have secured him long ago a freehold house and a good annuity—I say that if the curse of drink were thoroughly expelled it would rain gold in England, not for three but for many days.

2. We have assumed hitherto that intoxicating drinks are nothing in the world but a harmless luxury; but every man knows that they are not. The voice of science has laid it down unconditionally that all the young, and all who are in perfect health, do not need them, and are better without them. Many of the highest scientific authorities tell us further that even the moderate use of them is the cause of many painful disorders and thousands of premature deaths. In the middle classes the use of two wines—claret and sherry—is nearly universal; and even in the last few days the rival vendors of these wines have been telling the world that each of these wines consists of strange concoctions which are the causes of gout and all kinds of gastric disorders. Further we know, by the universal experience of the world, that wherever drinking is nationally common, drunkenness becomes nationally ruinous. And for this reason. Alcohol is one of a number of lethal drugs which have the fatal property of creating for themselves a crave, which in multitudes becomes an appetite; an appetite which strengthens into a vice; a vice which ends in disease; a disease which constitutes a crushing and degrading slavery. To myriads of human beings it creates a needless, an artificial, a physical temptation, which first draws, then drags, then drives as with a scourge of fire.

> "In their helpless misery blind,
> A deeper prison and heavier chains they find,
> And stronger tyrants."

Aristotle said of human nature, generally, that "We are prone rather to excess than to moderation;" but this natural propensity, this fatal bias, this original sin, is infinitely strengthened when it works, not only as a moral impulse, but as a physical law. No drunkard, since time began, ever meant to be a drunkard. To be a drunkard means nothing less than awful shipwreck of life and body; the curse of life; the agony of conscience; the obliteration of nobleness and hope. Why, then, are there 600,000 drunkards in England? Why is it that through drink we have seen "the stars of heaven fall and the cedars of Lebanon laid low?"* The flood was scarcely dried before Noah, discovering drink, introduced into his own family, and among mankind, a curse and an infamy.

> "Which since hath overwhelmed and drowned
> Far greater numbers on dry ground
> Of wretched mankind, one by one,
> Than e'er before the flood had done."†

They who will make a young tiger their plaything must not be surprised if there be some to whom it will show, at last, a wild trick of its ancestors. In every nation where there is free temptation to drink there will be many drunkards, and for this reason, that drink induces a taste which is "neither hunger, nor thirst, nor pleasure, nor reasonable want, but a morbid impulse, and indefinable desire":

> "Like the insane root,
> It takes the reason prisoner."

3. Then, next, what does the prevalence of drunkenness involve? It means that to thousands life becomes a long disease. Solomon told us that truth 3,000 years ago. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. At last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." *Delirium tremens*—that inconceivably awful and agonising illness, is but one of God's executioners upon excess. The fact

* Father Matthew. † Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*.

that a nation is addicted to drink and drunkenness means that the health of myriads will be ruined ; it means that myriads of children with diseased bodies, fatuous minds, and depraved impulses, will be, in the awful language of an old preacher, "not born into the world, but damned into the world," * as idiots, or cripples, or predestined drunkards ; a curse to nations, a curse to their neighbors, and to themselves, a curse to the very ideal of humanity which they drag down and degrade, poisoning its very life-blood, and barring its progress to the jail of better days. Oh ! Nations may enjoy their revelries ; but the river of enjoyment flows into a sea of misery, and disease is only indulgence taken at the later stage.

4. Nor is it only the bodies of men that suffer, it is their souls. Powerless for his deliverance, the conscience of the drunkard is not powerless for his torture. Robert Burns, Charles Lamb, and Hartley Coleridge have uttered the cry of men who have thus been swept over the cataract. The Spartans, when they wished to turn their children from the shame of intemperance, showed them the physical degradation, the drunken Helots ; but the physical results are nothing to the moral devastation, the abject servitude, the spiritual catastrophe of the man who has given himself over to the bondage of drink. When he recovers from the degradation of the animal, it is to feel the anguish of a lost soul. This is the reason why, year by year, drink not only crowds the workhouse with paupers, and the jails with felons, and the asylums with lunatics, and the hospitals with disease ; but also swells more than any other cause—swells week by week, and year by year—the list of those who through the awful gate of suicide rush, with rude insult, into the presence of their God. "The measure of alcohol consumed in a district," said Baron Dowse, "is the measure of the degradation." Whenever the drink tide rises highest, there, too, is the high-water mark of suicide, mortality and crime. Wherewithal a man—or a nation—sinneth by the same shall he be punished.

5. Nor is this all. The curse does not stay with him who caused it. It spreads in concentric circles of ruin. The drunkard almost invariably [illegible] of his own retribution. Go to some public house on Saturday night, between ten and twelve, when the miserable workingman is pouring into the till of

* R. South.

the publican, and the purse of the gin-distiller, the money which should clothe and feed his wife and little ones ; see when the gin palaces in our most pauperised districts are cleared at night, a scene which, for vileness, cannot be paralleled in any region of the world. Then follow the drunken man or drunken woman into the lair, which they call their home. Home? it is a Dantean hell of brutality and squalor, of which the very air reeks with abomination! "In former times the wife was usually the victim of her husband's brutishness ; now she becomes in innumerable cases the partner in his sin. In either case, be she victim or associate, no creature on earth so demands our pity." While threats and blows resound in that curse-laden air, the children—the ragged, miserable, half-starved, degraded children—the children who will grow up hereafter to recruit the ranks of the felon and the harlot huddled together in mute terror. "They do not cry : such children seldom do shed tears. Nature could never furnish a foundation to meet such demands." Often they make their escape into cellar or chimney, or hide themselves under the rotting heap of rags or straw, and do not venture to creep out, half suffocated, till the drink-maddened fiend whom they call "father" is away, or till he has slept off for a time the vitriol madness. And in most of our large towns there are whole streets and alleys, and districts of such drunkards' homes—infamous streets which hide hundreds of blighted families, the disgrace of our civilization and the disgrace of our Christianity. The only things which flourish there are the public houses, which, confronting the minimum of virtue with the maximum of temptation, drain from the wretched neighborhood its last life ; and like the fungus on the decaying tree, feed on the ruin, which is their boon. We have heard much in these few days of "Horrible London," and of the bitter cry of its abject. What makes these slums so horrible? I answer, with a certainty and confidence of one who knows, Drink! And what is the remedy? I tell you that every remedy you attempt will be a miserable failure ; I tell the nation, with the conviction founded on experience, that there will be no remedy till you save these outcasts from the temptations of drink. Leave the drink, and you might build palaces for them in vain. Leave the drink, and before the year was over your palaces would still reek with dirt and squalor, with infamy and crime. Of the trade in general, which ministers to this temptation, I will say nothing ; but at least in such vile

streets as these, whence, day and night, this bitter cry of abject cities rings in the ears of the Lord God of Sabbaoth, I should have thought that any man who believes in God, that any man who calls himself a Christian, would have been, not ashamed only, but afraid to swell those geysers of curse and ruin. In such districts, at any rate, I know not how they can be blind to the evils which spring from what they sell; or how they can fail to hear the stern words ringing in their ears:

> "Lo, saith
> The evil that thou causest to be done,
> That is thy means to live."

They who will not see this must be left to their own conscience, in that hour when she speaks, and we can be deaf no longer to her voice; but I ask every man concerned in those evils, which is best? which will they think best when, a few years hence, they face the hour of death and the day of judgment? to forego such tainted gains, or to go on contributing—inevitably contributing—to the wholesale manufacture of "infancy that knows no innocence; of youth, without modesty or shame; of maturity that is mature in nothing but guilt and suffering, of blasted old age, which is a scandal on the name we bear?"

6. But the tempted, the victims of drink—I ask you, do these men, these women, do these children, do these wretched districts, or do they not, deserve our pity, and demand our efforts at reform? Is it, or is it not—surely the question is plain and pressing—our duty to content ourselves with clever epigrams and plausible sophisms, and to be infinitely tender to vested interests in the causes of human ruin—or, with stern efforts and inflexible perseverance, to reduce an evil so colossal, to redeem men, our brothers, from a misery so deep as this?

7. Yet even now I have not come to the worst, or anything like the worst. For the abuse of drink, besides being, by unanimous testimony, a main cause of pauperism, disease, and madness is also, by irresistible evidence, the main cause of crime; the all but exclusive cause of crimes and violence. I might quote the emphatic, the oft-repeated, the uncompromising testimony of almost every judge upon the bench. They have done their best to interpose between us and our degradation the purity of their ermine. They have said, for instance, that Saturday means "pay-day," "drink-day and crime-day;" and that many a man

"enters the door of a public house respectable and respected, and leaves it a felon." On one occasion several instances at Liverpool came before Mr. Justice Mellor of a savagery so bestial, of a callosity so bestial, of a dehumanisation so unutterable, that he spoke of drink, which in this country is the sole cause of such abnormal wickedness, in terms which might, one would have thought, arouse any country however sunken. But I will confine myself to the remarks made by one judge in one Cathedral city—by Mr. Justice Hawkins at the last Midsummer Assizes in Durham. They may be well known to you. Yet I will repeat them. It may be that the words, spoken so solemnly from the bench of justice, may derive yet further emphasis when they are solemnly repeated in the House of God. "When I come," he said, "to look through the calendar, and when I see the number of cases which have been committed under the influence of drink, I cannot help saying a word or two on that subject. Every day I live the more I think of the matter, and the more firmly do I come to the conclusion that the root of almost all crime is drink, that revolting tyrant which affects people of all ages, and of both sexes; young, middle-aged, and old; father and son, husband and wife, all in turn become its victims. It is drink, which, for the most part, is the immediate and direct cause of those fearful quarrels in the public streets at night which terminate in serious mischief, or some other outrage. It is drink which for the most part is the incentive to crimes of dishonesty. It is drink which causes homes to be impoverished, and traces of the misery which it causes are to be found in many a cottage denuded of the commonest articles of comfort and necessity, which have gone to the pawnshop simply to provide for that hideous tyrant, drink. I believe, knowing what I do, and having by experience had my attention drawn to it that" (hear it, gentlemen! hear it, Christians! hear it, ministers of God in this Cathedral which stands at the very centre of all our history!)—"I believe that nine-tenths of the crime in this country is engendered inside the doors of public houses."

8. Will any one venture to say—for there is no end to the subterfuges of minds brazened by custom—that these are mere opinions? Well, if you want, not opinions, but hard, glaring, patent facts, untinged with any opinion whatever—cold, black, rugged, colourless, and horrible—fact in all their ghastly nakedness, denuded of all vesture of human

thought and of human emotion in narrating them—it will be the most flagrant hypocrisy to say that such facts are not forthcoming for you, when every day and every newspaper teems with them. Not one single day passes over one single town in England without some wretchedness, crime, and horror caused by drink. Week by week, in the *Alliance News,* is published a ghastly list, called "Fruits of the Traffic." It is not invented ; it is not concocted ; it is not garbled. It consists simply of cuttings from multitudes of perfectly neutral newspapers, the records of police courts and sessions. I cannot enter into these. The human hand can perpetrate, the human heart can conceive, the human frame can suffer horrors of which the human lips refuse to speak. Take the evidence of two weeks alone ; the blessed week in which we listen to the melody of angel songs, and the first week of the glad New Year. For two-pence you may purchase the record of events which drink caused for those two weeks in 1882 in England only. It fills a large double-columned pamphlet of thirty-six pages. Thirty-six pages of what—in this our Christian England, in Christmas week ? Thirty-six pages of stabbing, cutting, wounding ; of brutal assaults on men, on women, on children ; of public peril and accident ; of deaths, sudden, violent, preventible ; of homicide ; of parricide ; of matricide ; of infanticide ; of suicide ; of every form of murder. In four hours on one evening in one city 36,803 women were seen going into public houses ! The results formed a tragedy so squalid, and so deadly, as to sicken the heart like the impressions of a nightmare, whose very memory we loathe. Read that hideous list, and then prattle, and lisp, and sneer about exaggeration ; read that list, and then, if any man can still quote Scripture for the purpose of checking Temperance Reformers, or of encouraging our immense capacities for delay and indifference, I can only say of such a man, that

> "Though in the sacred place he stands,
> Uplifting consecrated hands,
> Unworthy are his lips to tell
> Of Jesus's martyr-miracle ;
> Thy miracle of life and death,
> Thou Holy One of Nazareth !"

9. And is all this to take place all over England always ? It was so again last year, it has been so for many years ; next year again, and the

next, and the next, are we, in those two weeks of blessedness, to have the whole country, from John o' Groat's to Land's End, deluged and disgraced by this filthy stream of blood, and misery, and crime? Is *this* to be the prerogative of our national morality; and are we to go on [illegible] and the sources of it, and the temptations to them unchecked, till the pit swallow us and them?

10. I must end; but I must ask you not to suppose that I have brought before you one-half of the evil, or one-tenth of the motives which should stir us up to counteract it for Christ's sake, and in Christ's name. I have not shown you as I could most awfully show you, how, by introducing our accursed firewaters, we have destroyed and exterminated whole races of mankind, until our footsteps round the world, instead of being "beautiful upon the mountains," have been as footsteps dyed in blood. I have not shown you the extent to which drink neutralises the work of the school, the library, and the church, so that it is the very chief barrier against the efforts of religion. I have not shown you how, in our great dependencies, it has gone far to turn into a curse the blessing of our rule, so that, to take but one instance, there [illegible] louder and louder, from our great Empire of Hindostan, the agonising cry that her children were once sober, and that we, by our beloved gin and spirits—those good creatures of God—are rapidly turning them into a nation of drunkards. I have not told how this curse transforms into a bane what would otherwise be the great national boons of larger [illegible] and brighter voyages, and shortened hours. And how long do you mean all this to continue? How long are our working classes to be hemmed in with glaring temptations, and their dwellings—in the teeth of their wishes, to the conflagration of their interests—to be ringed by public houses on all sides as with a cordon of fire? How long is the reeling army of our drunkards to be recruited by those who are now our innocent sons and daughters? We pity the gladiators, and the poet cried, "Arise ye, Goths, and glut your ire!" And will you not pity the widows, who are to be widows [illegible] drink; and the orphans who are fatherless; and they whose blood is poisoned by it; and the women who are kicked, and burnt, by drunken sons, and brothers, and husbands; and the children who are killed, or who die so slowly that none call it murder? Will you wait till the accumulated miseries of souls, which might have been innocent—

> "Plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
> The deep damnation of the taking-off;
> And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
> Striding the blast, on heaven's cherubim, horsed
> Upon the slightest couriers of the air,
> Shall blow these horrid deeds in every eye
> That tears shall drown the wind"?

And if you are careless about all this misery; if selfishness, and custom, and the gains of brewers and publicans, weigh with you against all this evidence; if you see no need to blush for all this national disgrace; if it rouses in your heart no feeling as a patriot, as a Christian, or as a man;—are you not at least *afraid*, lest, if we suffer these things to go on unchecked, a voice should at last cry "Arise!" to the awful angel of retribution; and lest, when he stands with drawn sword over a country so guilty and so apathetic, the cup of our iniquity and our drunkenness being full, there should be none to say to him, "Put up thy sword within its sheath?"

11. But if all that I have said admit of no possibility of refutation, how could I possibly urge any more effectual plea for an agency, which, like our beloved Church of England Temperance Society, has, with such holy earnestness and such conspicuous moderation, been labouring now for twenty-one years to alleviate a nation's misery, to avert a nation's curse? It needs special support. Help, I entreat you, with warm hearts and liberal hands, to avert the national catastrophe, which would be involved in the failure or exhaustion of a Society so noble and so indispensable! Let England, if not for very shame, yet at least out of gratitude and in self-defence, provide the Society with the £25,000 which are required. For if Temperance Societies have done nothing else, yet at least, in the words of Lord Shaftesbury, "but for them we should have been by this time plunged in such a flood of drunkenness, immorality, and crime, as would have rendered the whole country uninhabitable." Will you then be callously supine, will you be immorally acquiescent, about the fate of your country? Your fathers did a thousand noble deeds to put down immorality and wrong; to defend the cause of innocence, and to smite the hoary head of oppression. Your fathers, by the loveliest act in the long annals of English history, swept away the slave trade. With quiet perseverance, which would see no

discouragement; with dauntless courage, which would quail before no opposition; with illuminated insight, which pierced the sophistry of interested defenders; with the true freedom which would not be shackled by unhallowed interests—they fought to an end that glorious battle! Will you be unworthy of them? Will you do nothing to deliver England and all her dependencies from a deeper misery and a deadlier curse? Yonder is the grave of Wilberforce; there is the statue of Sir Fowell Buxton; there is the monument of Granville Sharpe. Oh, that God would hear our prayers, and out of the gallant band of godly men who fought that battle

> Of those three hundred grant but three
> To make a new Thermopylæ."

12. Englishmen and Christians, if such facts do not stir you up, I ask could they do so were they even in the thunder's mouth? It is not in the thunder, it is by the still small voice of history and of experience, that God speaks to the reason and to the conscience. It is not by the lightning-flash that He would have us read His will, but by the quiet light that shows all things in the slow history of their ripening. When He speaks in the thunder and the lightning, by the tornado and the earthquake, He speaks in retribution then. And what is retribution but the eternal law of consequences? If you cannot see God's warnings against drink, if you cannot read in the existing condition of things His displeasure and our shame—if you cannot see it in the marriage-tie broken and dishonoured—in sons and daughters ruined—in the peace of families laid waste—in the work of the church hindered—in whole districts blighted—in thousands and ten of thousands of souls destroyed:—If you cannot see it in the records of crime, and murder, and outrage, and madness, and suicide: in the fathers who, in these very months, through drink, have slain their sons; and the sons who, through drink, have slain their fathers; and the mothers who, for drink, have sacrificed the lives of their little ones upon the breast—what will ever make you see it? Men of England, if these things do not wring your heart, and fire your zeal, what do you expect? Can the letters glare more plainly on the palace wall of your power? Are you waiting till there fall on England the same fate which, for their sins, has fallen in turn on Assyria, and Greece, and Rome, and Egypt, and Carthage, and Jerusa-

lem, and Tyre? They perished; sooner or later all guilty nations perish, by sudden catastrophe, or by slow decay.

> "The sword of heaven is not in haste to smite,
> Nor yet doth linger."

but when it does smite, it is apt to smite once and smite no more. Will you be so complacent over your epigrams, and your vested interests, and your Biblical criticism, when vengeance leaps at last upon the stage, and strikes sore strokes, and pity shall no longer avert the blow? You are Christians; yes, but see that you have not been admitted into a holier sanctuary only to commit a deeper sacrilege! Why, had you been *Pagans* these very same arguments ought to be irresistible to you! To millions of Pagans they have been so. The sobriety of China was due to Confucius. The sobriety of India and of Burmah are due to Buddah. The sobriety of vast regions of Asia and Africa was due to Mahomet. In the day of judgment, shall not Confucians, shall not Buddists, shall not Mohammedans, rise up in judgment against this generation and condemn it, for they abstained from strong drink at the bidding of Confucius, Buddah and Mahomet, and behold a greater than these is here! Ah, if the voice of all these tempted, suffering, perishing miserable souls be nothing to you—if the voice of your country be nothing to you—yet, if you be Christians, listen to the voice of Christ, pleading with you in the pathetic accents of myriads of the little ones, that it is not His will, that it is utterly against His will, that His Cross and Passion be thus rendered of none effect to multitudes, for the very least of whom Christ died. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not" (when now, at any rate, you have no excuse for not knowing it), "doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? And shall not He render to every man according to his works?"

NON-COMMUNICATING ATTENDANCE.

BY THE REV. J. GOING.

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Delivered at a recent meeting of the West Dorset Clerical Society.

My brethren, the questions I propose for our consideration are these: First, how is it that so many of our communicants are not communicants? Secondly, can anything be done to remedy the evil?

Are there not in most of our congregations very many people, sincere and religious people according to their lights, regular in coming to church year after year, but who never come to Holy Communion? What a large proportion—may I not say, what a large majority—of many congregations may be seen on Communion Sundays (as they are called) trooping out of church in the middle of the service, and walking away, chatting together, apparently quite happy, as though the Holy Communion was no concern of theirs. Month after month the priest calls to his people from the pulpit, "Will ye also go away?" but they go away all the same, and only a few comparatively remain behind to fulfil their Lord's command, "Do this in remembrance of Me." And here I am not speaking of neglected parishes, or of feeble and inefficient priests, or of wrong-headed men that have disgusted their parishioners by doing, perhaps, right things in a wrong and ill-judged way. Have we not known priests, zealous and earnest, not only in teaching and exhorting their people in church, but also in pastoral visitation—men to whom every face in their parish was familiar, and who were welcome in every cottage and farm-house, who were looked up to with love and respect by the old and young; men who, in fact, could do almost everything with their people except one thing, and that is to get them to come to the Holy Communion. A dead weight seemed to paralyse their efforts in this, and they could only succeed in bringing a few, comparatively, to the Lord's table. My brethren, this is a practical question of the gravest importance. It is not a matter of theologi-

cal dispute or polemical controversy, and I do not wish to raise any such questions. I do not in the slightest degree wish to define what Holy Communion is. I only wish to take for granted that our Lord said "Do this in remembrance of Me," and that a large proportion, not to say a majority, of our church-goers neglect to do so. I believe that nothing has tended to bring about this state of things so much as our custom of turning out from our churches, before the celebration of Holy Communion, all those people who are not going to communicate. Everybody knows that in the Primitive Church it was only the unbaptized and the excommunicate that were warned to leave the church before the Celebration, but among us the custom has grown up for everybody to leave the church who is not going to communicate. It is a custom which has no sanction whatever from the usage of the Primitive Church, or from the Prayer Book or Canons of the Church of England; but, nevertheless, it is a custom which, until a few years ago was universal, and which is still very general.

The Church of Rome, wise in her generation, has never ceased to permit and encourage all Christian people to remain in the church and worship with the communicants, though they did not intend at that time to communicate. She was far too wise and too far-seeing to turn out her future communicants, just at the very time when they were most likely to be attracted to her altars. But the Puritans, blinded by their rabid fear of superstition, and desiring to differ as widely as possible from the Church of Rome, rejected this custom of the Primitive Church and in order to obtain legal sanction for the practice which they had already introduced, they endeavoured, in the year 1563, to get a canon passed through Convocation to the following effect:—"That no person abide within the church during the time of the communion unless he do communicate—that is, that they shall depart immediately after the Exhortation be ended, and before the Confession of the communicants." Had this custom been part of the Reformation Settlement, as some people seem to suppose, there had been no need of a new canon to sanction it. However, Convocation rejected the proposed canon, but, nevertheless, the custom it was intended to sanction spread as Puritanism spread. Alas! this was only one of many instances in which then, as now, the Law of the Church was one way, the popular practice another. The Puritans carried their point with the people, though they could not

do so with Convocation, and thus a custom entirely new to the Church of England, and indeed to the Church of Christ, was surreptitiously introduced into our Churches, notwithstanding the refusal of Convocation to sanction it.

In the following year (1564) Bishop Jewel wrote his reply to the Jesuit Harding. Harding had alleged among other things that the Bishop had taught that "all the people ought to receive or be driven out of the Church." Jewel's reply was as follows "O Mr. Harding, how long will you thus wilfully pervert the ways of the Lord? you know this is neither the doctrine nor the practice of our Church." (Works p. 186, Parker Society Edition.) Every year Puritanism grew stronger. By 1559 Mr. Green tells us that three-fourths of the Protestants of England were Puritans, and when Laud was raised to the Episcopate in 1628, that historian states that "the mass of the clergy, like their flocks, were steady Puritans,"—he estimates that at this time "nine-tenths of the English people were Puritans." A continual contest raged between the Bishops, contending for the Law of the Church, and supported by the Sovereign, and the Puritans, fighting against it with the populace on their side, until the terrible strife culminated in the execution of Laud and Charles, the overthrow of the monarchy and the episcopate, and the expulsion of the loyal clergy. The vacant cures were occupied by Puritan ministers, the Law of the Church was set aside by the Directory, and the performance of any service, even in private, according to the English Prayer Book, was made a penal offence. If in 1628 nine-tenths of the people of England were Puritans, what proportion of them must have been Puritans under the Commonwealth, when Puritanism was everywhere triumphant, and had in fact become the established religion? The Commonwealth lasted for eleven years, and of course we may be sure that what had been the general custom, in spite of the Bishops, became the universal custom when the Bishops were abolished. No one can doubt that during those eleven years all who were not going to communicate would leave the church before the Celebration. The Restoration took place in 1660. Can we wonder that although the Law of the Church was restored, the practice of the people remained in a great degree what it had been? We have seen that as far back as 1563 it had become a very general practice for all who were not going to communicate to leave the church before the Celebration.

and that that practice must have become universal under the Commonwealth. Can we wonder that a custom which had been growing for a hundred years, and had for at least eleven years become universal, was not easily altered at the Restoration? The Puritan ministers who conformed, and retained their livings, would naturally conform as little as possible; and in parishes from which the Puritan minister was ejected, the people very generally took the side of the ejected minister, and opposed and thwarted his successor. Everybody craved for peace; so that although the law of the Church was restored, obedience to it could not be restored, and the Puritan practice of turning out from the Church all who are not going to communicate, continues very generally to this day. I have been told that in my own parish, some fifty or sixty years back, it was even the custom to lock the doors of the church during the Celebration, lest any of those who had left the church before the Celebration might return and obtain admission. Aged people in my parish have told me that when they were young, they, and others who had been shut out, used to peep in at the keyhole of the west door of the church to see what was going on. What a difference it might have made if they had been invited to come in, and kneel down in the body of the church with the communicants, though they were not communicants! Surely they would have been brought up to the Communion (as we may say), and prepared for it, in their childhood. As it is, the Communion Service has become a thing strange and unfamiliar to the great body of the people—a thing in which they are supposed to have no interest; a thing awful and dangerous, rather than loving and attractive, and, I believe, this is the chief cause why our communicants are so few, our non-communicating Christians so many.

Dissenters see the need of educating their young people for what they call the Ordinance, and they lead them on to desire it for themselves by allowing and encouraging them to be present at it, before they consider them old enough, or sufficiently advanced in spiritual religion, to receive the bread and wine which they believe to be the Lord's Supper. As far back as the year 1859 I had a very excellent and able man for churchwarden in my London parish of St. Paul's, Walworth, who, like myself, had been brought up a Dissenter; and he told me that in the Dissenting chapel where he and his family used to attend, the young people were invited up into the galleries on the Ordinance Sundays

to witness the administration of the Ordinance as it went on from pew to pew in the body of the chapel, according to the Dissenting ritual; and he said that this was done because those Dissenters recognized that the most powerful agency within their reach, to act upon the hearts of these young people, was the force of example and sympathy which was thus brought to bear upon them at such a time. In this way the young became familiar with the service, and learned to look forward to it as what would one day concern themselves, and as they saw their elders and their own relations reverently joining in that which, even with them, is the greatest act of worship, they were drawn by the power of sympathy and example, and by their best and holiest feelings, to wish to do, by and by, what they saw their elders doing now, and they desired to share one day in that privilege which they could already see was so precious to their parents and older friends.

As I have said, I was myself brought up a Dissenter, and I can testify by my own experience, that such are the feelings of the young, when allowed to be present at what they believe to be the Lord's Supper. My parents belonged to the Plymouth Brethren, and I was used to attend their meetings, which were held in a little upper room in a neighboring town. We children, boys and girls, used to attend the meeting with our parents, and were always present when "the brethren," seated, passed around from one to another a little slice of bread, upon a common plate, from which each one broke off a small morsel, and reverently consumed it, and each one took a sip of the wine that was sent around; but though we young people were always present, the bread and the wine were never handed to us. I never at that time doubted that this was really the Lord's Supper, and I well remember how the force of sympathy and example used to make me look forward to doing what I saw my parents do—as I should certainly have done in due time, had I not learned better from a young Churchman with whom, shortly after, I formed a warm and lasting friendship. I may add that many Dissenters have told me that in their experience it is a common practice among Dissenters to allow their young people to be present at the ordinance without receiving.

Now if this practice of allowing the young people to be present at "the ordinance" has been such a powerful agency in spreading and perpetuating Dissent, can we not see what an injury the Church must

have sustained when it came to be the practice to turn out the young, and those who might otherwise have been led on to Communion, just at the very time when the power of example and the force of reverent sympathy would have been likely to operate most strongly upon their minds. Alas! the Church of England has the unhappy distinction of being, as I believe, the only Christian community in the world in which this suicidal practice has been adopted, in spite of the fact that in 1563 she formally refused to sanction this deviation from the practice of the Primitive Church; and although in 1564 the greatest of her bishops declared that what is now our common practice was "neither the doctrine nor the practice of our Church" of England.

I was ordained in 1849, having learned two things from the Plymouth Brethren. 1st, that the Lord's Supper ought to be celebrated every Sunday, every "first day of the week" (see Acts xx. 7); 2nd, that every Christian, come to years of discretion, ought to be a communicant. I was ordained to a parish of 15,000 people in the poorest part of Lambeth, with only one church, in which there was a congregation of about 700 people, of whom about 10 per cent. were communicants, but with few exceptions these were non-parishioners. I am sure there were not above 20 or 30 communicants among the 15,000 parishioners, if so many, and nobody seemed shocked at such a state of things. In 1858 I came to St. Paul's, Walworth. On Easter Day in that year the communicants numbered 65, the congregation was between 600 and 700, the population of the parish was 12,000. I remember that same year, in a neighboring church, where the congregation was about 1,000, the communicants on Easter Day were barely over 100, the population of the parish was 20,000. In 1859 I became vicar of St. Paul's, Walworth, and, aided by my excellent churchwarden, who, as I have said, had been, like myself, brought up a Dissenter, I introduced the custom of inviting the whole congregation, whether going to communicate or not, to remain in church for prayer and praise to the end of the service. I had no difficulty about it even then. I explained to the people how useful the Dissenters found the practice, and, following my advice, they remained to the end of the service. I found my communicants steadily increase, and every year more rapidly than the last, until we reached a total of 500 on Easter Day, 1872, instead of the 65 with which we began; and I attribute this increase mainly to the effect upon

the congregation of joining habitually in worship with the communicants.

Before writing this paper I requested several friends, at whose churches it is customary for the whole congregation to remain through the Celebration, to give me the benefit of their experience in this matter, and especially I asked them to tell me—1st, the number of their communicants last Easter; 2nd, the number of their usual Sunday congregations "at those services throughout the day that are most largely attended," both morning and evening, my object being to form some idea of the proportion of the communicants to the general average congregation. I did not propose to compare parishes, but only congregations; for in different parts of London, and, indeed, in different parts of the country, the circumstances of different parishes are so different, that the proportion of communicants to population would teach nothing as to the proportion of church-going non-communicants, but something might be learned, I thought, by observing the proportion of communicants to the general congregation; one could see whether the congregation was largely composed of communicants or of church-going non-communicants.

At St. Stephen's, Lewisham, with its chapel-of-ease, I find the average general congregation on Sunday mornings, counting both churches together is, morning, 1,050; evening, 1,450. The communicants on Easter Day numbered 1,150, being more than the general morning congregation. The vicar, Mr. Rhodes Bristow, writes: "I have a settled conviction from a wide experience, that nothing tends so directly to increase the number of communicants as the encouragement of non-communicating attendance." By the way, I wish some one would furnish me with a concise substitute for this invidious and misleading expression, "non-communicating attendance," for non-communicating attendance is just what we have got in our old fashioned churches, and it is precisely what I want to get rid of—my whole desire in these remarks is to bring our people to the Lord's Table for which non-communicating attendance is no substitute in the sight of God. Dr. West, of St. Mary Magdalene, Paddington, tells me that his communicants last Easter Day numbered 1,081, and that his usual general congregation is between 700 and 800. I have not ascertained the number of communicants at St. Augustines, Kilburn, last Easter Day, but four

years back they numbered 1,100 on Easter Day, and I do not suppose they were less this year. I suppose the church might hold about the same number but not more.

The Vicar of St. Michael's, Croydon, tells me that his usual congregation is between 700 and 800, and that his communicants last Easter numbered 644. And he added the following words—"When I was taking part in the Manchester Mission some years ago, the rector of the parish where I worked—a rather Broad Churchman, with a dash of High, but only a dash—told me that when he came to the parish he found scarcely any communicants, nor could he get his people to come to Communion. After some time it occurred to him to tell the whole congregation to remain throughout the service; they obeyed, and his communicants largely increased."

At St. John-the-Divine, Kennington, the number of the communicants on Easter Day was 950. The ordinary Sunday congregation varies from 700 to 800.

At St. Matthias, Earl's Court, Brompton, the communicants on Easter Day were 830. The ordinary congregation varies from 1,200 to 1,300.

At St. Agnes', Kennington Park, the congregation varies from 450 to 500 on Sundays. The nember of communicants on Easter Day were 425.

At St. Mary Magdelene's, Munster-square, the communicants on Easter Day numbered 392. The general congregation varies from 450 to 550.

At Christ Church, Clapham, the communicants at Easter were 351. The congregation usually varies from 500 to 800.

At St. Alban's, Holborn, the communicants at Easter numbered 486, out of a general congregation of from 600 to 800.

At St. Peter's, Vauxhall, the number of communicants on Easter Day was 400, which is also the number of the average Sunday congregation.

I have not been able to ascertain particulars from those churches where the people who are not going to communicate leave the church before the Celebration, but from my general knowledge of London churches, I do not think in many of these the Easter communicants would be found to outnumber the general congregation, or approach anything near that number.

Now, my brethren, I can not but think that there is something o

cause and effect to be traced in the figures that I have given you. I believe that in those churches from which these figures have been supplied, the number of the communicants, in proportion to the general congregation, is far in excess of what it is in those churches from which those who are not going to communicate go out before the Celebration. And, of course, the number of non-communicating church-goers must be in the same proportion less, and I believe the main cause is the kindling of sympathy and the attraction of love that is exacted by the service itself and by the force of example.

But it may be said the thing cannot be done in our country parishes; the people would rebel against it; there would be an uproar. Certainly there will, if you do it before you have won the confidence of your people and explained your objects to them, individually and personally, especially by friendly conference with all those people from whom you might expect opposition; and I would say do not make the change until you can foresee that it can be done without making an uproar. Of course, I should not be justified in recommending to others what I had not been able to do myself, and it is only to show that I have not been recommending an impossibility that I mention the fact that in my present country parish the thing has been done without the slightest friction, and the people all remain till the end of the Celebration, nor has there been the slightest manifestation of ill-feeling in consequence. Of course, it has not been done in a hurry. For some eight years past I have been carefully teaching my people the dignity and importance of the Holy Communion, and its high place in Christian worship; and my lamented predecessor had faithfully done the same thing before me, but it was not till last Easter twelvemonth that, for the first time, I pressed upon all the congregation the propriety of all remaining to join in the worship of God, though all might not as yet feel prepared to communicate. And the whole congregation did remain to the end of the service. I do not remember that even one person went out before the blessing. I should think quite half the people present had never witnessed a Celebration of the Holy Communion before in their lives, and I must add that their behaviour could not have been more reverent or solemn than it was on that occasion. Since that time I have urged my people to continue the practice, and with very few exceptions, they have done so; but the service, as usually

arranged is dreadfully long, morning prayer at 10:30 followed by the Litany, then Holy Communion with sermon. People must be saints indeed who could fail to be wearied, and I am one of those who think the sermon ought not to be omitted. Then, again, the time in which 50 or 60 communicants are receiving must hang very heavily on young people who are not yet communicants, unless you give them something to do during that interval. I therefore arranged last Easter to have Morning Prayers at 10, half-an-hour earlier than heretofore, on the first Sunday in the month, as a wholly separate service said plain without a choir or a hymn, and I put the Litany at three in the afternoon, thus leaving myself free to begin the Communion Service punctually at 10:30, the hour at which Matins commence on the other Sundays in the month. At that hour I enter the church, with the choir and the holy vessels, go straight to the altar, and at once begin the Communion Service. The sermon is preached at the usual time, and suitable hymns are sung by the choir, and joined in by the people, while the communicants are receiving, and the whole service is over before 12 o'clock. On the first Sunday in July we had more than 50 communicants, and the service was over, and I and the choir had returned to the vestry by ten minutes to 12 ; nor did a single person leave the church before the blessing, [I may add that it was the same on the first Sunday in August.] Since last Easter, when this change of the service was adopted, I have not heard a single complaint. On the contrary, many people have told me how much they enjoyed the service, especially the singing of the hymn during the communion of the people. We write up the numbers on a board which all the people can see (a greater number of hymns than we shall probably require to sing), so that we have no need to give out the hymns during the Communion. When the last communicant has received, we simply finish the hymn that we are singing, and begin the post-communion service. I may say that where many of the people are unaccustomed to mental prayer, I think this plan better than keeping the congregation on their knees all the time the people are receiving, for any one that wishes to kneel can do so, and many do kneel, perhaps in time all may do so, as they used to do in my London church. It is true that I have tried this plan only for a short time in my country parish, but I followed it for nearly 20 years in my London parish, with the result that my communicants in a few years

became eight times as many as they had been, and in my present parish, short as the time has been, the increase since I adopted this system has been very considerable.

My [illegible] I have endeavoured to deal with this question entirely in a practical and common-sense way. I have tried to steer clear of anything controversial or polemical. This is a practical question of the very highest importance, for which, owing to party spirit, it is sometimes impossible to get a hearing. If any one is afraid of Popish errors he will still possess every facility that he at present possesses, of warning his people against them; and by all means let him do so, but let him not persevere in a system which seems to have resulted in hindering so many of our people from being communicants at all, under the idea that he will thereby be strengthening the Church of England or weakening the Church of Rome, for our real weakness lies in the fewness of our communicants, and whatever will increase their number will [illegible] strengthen the Church of England in her contest with Rome.

SCRIPTURE THEMES AND FAMOUS PAINTINGS.

BY THE REV. DAVID DAVIES.

Preached at Regent's-park Chapel, Sunday, February 15, 1885.

THE VALE OF TEARS.

"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."—MATT. iv, 16.

I HAVE on a previous occasion preached from the verse which is generally associated with Gustav Doré's picture, "The Vale of tears"—"Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; in addition to this, I am not sure that it conveys as precisely the conception which the artist has sought to embody on canvas as the words which I have just read for my text.

I view the text as representing—

I. The condition of humanity without Christ.

II. The nature of the blessing which Christ's advent into the world brought with it.

1. The condition of the human race without Christ. Of course, these words on the lips of the prophet who first uttered them, as also of the evangelist who refers to their fulfilment, had a primary meaning, but on the principle that no prophecy is "of any private [or *special*] interpretation," these words have also a general significance. Christ's advent into the world not only affected the condition of those with whom by His personal ministry He was thus early brought into contact, but also of the whole human race whose nature He assumed. The verse describes graphically not only the state of certain benighted districts, but of the whole world without the Christ. He, and He only, is "the light which lighteth every man coming into the world."

Thus our text graphically describes the condition of humanity by sin:—"Sat in darkness. . . . Sat in the region and shadow of death." I think that this [illegible] has been wonderfully represented on canvas

on the picture to which I call your attention this evening. All the light we see in that deep, rugged gorge streams from the Christ and His Cross; *all else is dark.* It is a fearful representation of misery, desolation, ruin, and death. There it is, a narrow ravine flanked on each side and crossed here and there by rugged cliffs and scarred buttresses of rock. This gorge is thronged with people. At the extreme end Christ appears bearing His cross, which, like Himself, beams with translucent light. Near to Him, and on the right of the spectator, are prostrate forms expressive of the utmost despair, some not even looking at the light, being all but blinded by its sudden appearance. Near to these are the aged and decrepit, especially one upon a cripple's crutches, and leaning heavily upon his staff, and another with his arm cast over the shoulder of his fellow, and leaning upon him as if ready to fall. These catch the light and are gladdened by it. Near them, to the right, is a hermit, who has sought in seclusion light and blessedness, and who, with uplifted hand, points to the Christ and exults in His light. Leaning upon him, wearied with journeyings oft, and carrying a staff of palm-tree in his hand, is the palmer, who looks with ecstatic joy upon Him whom he has never seen before. He has visited religious shrines, and kneeled upon many a sacred place which are supposed Christ had trod during His earthly sojourn; but now he sees *Him*, and is lost in the glorious vision. To his left is a mitred bishop, startled by the light, crossing his hands upon his breast as he tramples under foot the miserable fire of thorns which he had kindled wherewith to lighten the valley, and now rejoices in the true light. Beyond him, in the immediate background, we see a little group gaze with keen interest and surprise upon him as he quenches the fire of his own making and looks to Christ and Christ only. At a little distance to his left, and nearer us, is a kneeling prisoner still in chains. We see but his profile. He is startled, and for the moment knows not what meaning to attach to the light or that to which it points. He sees whence the light comes. Near him is the king, whose royal robes of gold, scarlet, and ermine overhang the prisoner. Yet he wears no longer his crown, and with his right arm arching over and resting upon his brow, and with countenance pallid with despair, looks upon the Cross. Cross-bearer. Near him, upon the left, and leaning upon him, in a falling attitude, is the poet or minstrel. The lyre is at his feet, and the laurels are yet green upon his brow; but, dying from a wound which the shaft

of envy or the dagger of open foe has inflicted, he casts his last glance of helplessness toward the light.

Behind him is the crusader, clad in armour, but, with helmet doffed, revealing a wound upon [illegible] and with hands uplifted hailing the advent of the Lord, but meanwhile, with the chivalry of the true [illegible] the two mothers near—the one lifting up her dead or dying child toward the light, the other [illegible] hand lifting up her living child, and with the other pointing to the Saviour and His Cross. Behind the crusader are the representatives of the law and philosophy in pensive attitude, and behind the mother whose child is dying, or dead, is possibly her parent, but, as I think, the physician who is seeking to aid or comfort, when, lo! light and joy come from another direction. Still further to the right there are groups, on distant shelves of rock on the rugged sides of the valley, in whose countenances, as far as they can be traced, are expressed varied and conflicting feelings.

We come to the immediate foreground, whence the eye gradually travels to the extreme left of the picture. This is the darkest corner of the painting. It is where the gorge descends by a sudden slope into a lower one. Here the canvas is thronged by representatives of various races and conditions of people, who hurry, half-hopingly and half-despairingly toward the light. There is scarcely enough light here to trace their features. The eye must gradually expand its pupil to catch the few rays reflected from these sad countenances. At the extreme corner, farthest from the Christ, is the fallen woman. In the countenance of this Magdalene there is a subtle blending of beauty and guilt, of desire to be blessed and of utter hopelessness that she ever shall be blessed. As she casts a look over her shoulder toward the light she represents one of the saddest figures in the whole picture. Her very position, as the farthest from the Christ, is expressive of the difficulty which such an one finds, owing to the cold looks and cruel suspicions of others, to return to the light. Oh, men and women, is that true? Is the woman who has lost a good name to be driven farthest from the great Saviour because we men and women—Christians as we call ourselves—will not let her hope?

Near her are representatives of numerous classes and conditions of

men from different lands and times—the aged philosopher, the slave in bonds, the lame, the mutineer, the mother and her child. *The mother and her child*, I say. We again meet with this aspect of life. The picture is full of domesticity, and glows with the sacred affection in the midst of the densest darkness. That son who tenderly loved his mother, and who knew something of her love toward him, gives, in different forms, a prominence to *the mother and her child* in almost all his great paintings.

But to return to that throng. There, too, is a poor blind one who cannot see the light, yet rushes up in the direction of the current; there are some cast down in the struggle and all but trodden under foot; among others are men whose countenances are marvelously like those whom we saw in that mocking throng when the Christ descended from the Pretorium to the open space beneath. The stamp of darkness is upon their brow, and the deeds of darkness written in the lineaments of their features. At the head of this motley crowd, and taking the foremost—a woman—by the hand, is a maiden, encouraging their hope and leading them toward the light.

To the left, in the middle distance of the picture, there is a miserable group who verily "*sit* in darkness . . . and *sit* in the region of the shadow of death." We here emphasise the word "sit" in our text. So in this picture they sit. They have given up hoping, they sit helplessly in gloom; and with despair, and nothing but despair written upon their brow, they do not seek the light. These figures are ill defined, and doubtless for a reason. They are lepers. Their leprosy is delicately concealed by the veil of indistinctness. They are in a dark place and at a distance from us. There is only one of their number who shows any signs of hope. He has got up to hail the presence of the Saviour, and to catch if it be but a ray of that light.

Near this miserable group, and separating them from the others bravely ascending up the steep from the darkness into the light, is a blasted tree, the trunk of which is broken midway, and which sends out its naked arms, but shows no sign of life. There in the darkest spot of all, just where the rays cease in deadly shadow, and beyond the sorrowful Magdalene, we see lurking the serpent, symbol of the Old Tempter, crawling hurriedly into the thicket darkness—the only living thing in that painting who runs away from the light.

That is, as far as I have been able to express it in words, the painter's representation of the world without Christ and His Cross. Read the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses of this chapter. Giving to the words more than their literal meaning, and attaching to them the broader significance of which they are so capable—since all physical diseases were but typical of the more dire spiritual diseases of our race—you have in them an exact counterpart of this painting. "Jesus went about . . . healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. . . . And they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those which had the palsy; *and He healed them.*" That is the dark background upon which the Evangelist presents the coming light; that is the state of misery and woe which the Evangelist would picture as that to which Christ came—the very need which had in it sufficient attractive power to draw Infinite Beneficence toward it. Therefore, when the painter, in the language of his art, represents humanity as being struck with misery and plagues at the time that light appears, he is but representing the state of the world without the Saviour, the condition of humanity before He who bore the Cross came to it to redeem it and to heal all its backslidings.

Verily, this is a "Vale of tears." All nations and all classes of people have had to walk in it, and walk in darkness until the light of Christ has shone upon them.

We look upon M. Doré's painting as a very powerful expression of this truth. The fact that he died before it was quite finished has not materially withdrawn from its value as an allegorical painting. This great painter never seems to have had patience to finish the details of his paintings according to the traditions of his art. It might have been as well had other hands in matters of detail completed his conceptions. His was that creative faculty—*imagination*—which dashed upon canvas in bold outline [illegible] himself asserted that "finish" was but a question of distance, or focus, and that if people would but stand at the right distance—fifty feet or so in the case of his largest picture—the paintings *were* finished. The career of this great man as a painter was a mystery. He never passed through the recognized [illegible] audience many of the unacknowledged

traditions: and the question was asked, "Who taught this man painting?" Yet, while critics quibbled, *criticised*, and thousands were charmed by his productions. He was a born painter, not the product of a school; and where there was no need of strict historical accuracy, and imagination had free scope, he produced marvellous results. He startled men with the majestic sweep of his unfettered imagination and with the bold execution of his daring hand.

In this painting as in many point to minute defects and want of finish; but they cannot deny that the painter has thrown a living creation upon the canvas. Be this painting what it may be, it is a *living* painting—there life appeals to life, and not in vain. M. Doré was an original, daring man and a master of effect. And whatever else he was it is evident from this painting that he knew not a little of the sorrows of this life. We are reminded that previous to the production of this work he had been bereaved of his mother, to whom he was so tenderly devoted, and had lost an old trusted servant and friend of his youth. He had tasted of the bitterness of trial, and felt the chill of death's shadow as it rested upon his heart. The very trials which befall us are often those which qualify us for the higher ministries of life. It was so with Doré. This was his last painting. He could not have produced it years before—before he knew the bitterness of life's bitterest tears. We see the tenderness of his nature, too, in this last painting as we do not in the others. It was with the vision that comes in the night of sorrow, and the tenderness begotten of fellow suffering, that he took up the brush for this his last work—a work which cannot fail to be a message of consolation to many sorrowing ones who view it.

Having dwelt upon the darker aspect of the picture, let us consider.

II. The blessing which Christ confers by His advent into the world. He brings life and light with Him: "The people which sat in darkness *saw great light;* and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death *light is sprung up*." According to John, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Our Saviour Himself exclaimed, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." How harmonious, and how true, are these varied utterances!

The painting to which we refer conveys the same truth. All the light that enters that ravine comes from Christ and His cross. Above are

the towering clouds. They touch the scarred and rugged sides of the valley as they descend beneath their burden. There is no ray of light that comes from the sky; the darkness above is impenetrable. *It is Christ that gives the light.* This painting is a marvellous expression of Christ as "The Light of the World"—the theme so graphically depicted from another standpoint by Mr. Holman Hunt in his famous picture.

Around Jesus and His cross there is no nimbus, but there is a rainbow. Beautifully expressive! Above are the clouds, heavy with their burden, shedding tears on the desolate vale; and there the light which streams from the cross and the crucified One, reflected and refracted in the tears of clouds, forms a gracious rainbow. That rainbow is the offspring of the storm and the light. There is no colour in it. It is a rainbow of the night, such an one as in this country we only see once or twice probably in a lifetime. I have seen it once, and there recognise the production on canvas. And what a bow of the covenant does that rainbow become to all who in that dark valley receive the light and "follow on to know the Lord," whose "going forth is prepared as the morning!"

Christ now bears His Cross. It is not merely placed athwart His path, as in the painting of "Christ Leaving the Prætorium." There the painter apparently felt that to place the cross upon the shoulders of the Great Sufferer would withdraw from the representation of His majestic movement; but he feels that no longer. Henceforth Christ and His cross must never be severed. Now He bears His Cross, not as an instrument of torture, but as a *trophy of triumph.* There is no other hope for us, or light from any other source, that shall gladden and satisfy the heart. Have you ever been, or seen another, in great sorrow, and have you found light come to you from any other direction than Christ and His Cross? Have you ever heard any one sing "songs in the night" inspired by any other hope than that which Jesus inspires? Appeal to history. In the history of the world has anything brought light into the Vale of Tears to compare with that which the vision of the cross has brought?

At the extreme end of this valley there is another vale, which turns abruptly to the right, into which that cross dips, and along which it would appear Jesus came. Opposite that valley, and even in the one of which we have spoken so much to-night, there are signs of verdure.

Thus are we led to believe that along that unseen valley the light streams, and transfigures even "The Vale of Tears" at its extreme end. We have, in our experience, seen some dear ones at that extreme end, where the cross is seen in the painting, just as they were about to take the last turn, and enter upon the final stage of their pilgrimage. All at once a light came; we could not see whence it came. It was a side light; but in each case the countenance was transfigured, so that, like the face of Stephen in similar circumstances, it was "as it had been the face of an angel." There they were, within reach of heaven's own light; but we could not see it, save by reflection. They "stood in the light of God"; "His seal was on" their "brow."

Christ has trodden all the path before us. We have but to follow Him. The more we follow on to know Him the greater the light and joy we shall receive. He exclaims, "I am the light of the world." Many of us have realized that He is *our* light. He entered our hearts like the light. There was no noise or bustle; but He came and, lo! old things passed away and all things became new. "He said, Let there be light, and there was light."

How many of us have *not* received Him? "This is the condemnation [or "*damnation*"], that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, *because their deeds are evil.*" Therein lies the philosophy of it all. Those bad habits which some of you have formed, sinful thoughts which you have cherished, and evil deeds which you have performed will not let you come into the light. Like the serpent in the painting they crawl anywhere, anywhere out of the light; and you must lurk with them or abandon them for ever. Oh, the tender pathetic appeal of the Christ, the echo of which will sound as the terrible judgement of the last great day: "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." May we hear and obey the appeal now so that we may never hear its condemnation hereafter

HINDUISM.

BY REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, D. D.

Preached in Eccleston-square Church on Sunday Evening, January 25.

JEREMIAH X, 11.

"The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens."

IF to-day you could enter the city of Benares you would ask a legion of questions relative to the buildings visible, the habits of the people, and the reasons why the streets are so frequented by mendicants and sufferers. Benares is the Hindu capital of Hindostan—the ecclesiastical metropolis of India. Situated upon the banks of the Ganges, in the presidency of Bengal, with a population of over 190,000, it is the resort of pilgrims from all parts of India, Tibet, and Burmah. Passing through the place, stretching nearly four miles along the river banks, you would observe about 1,000 pagodas, 300 mosques, one mosque in particular, which, with its two minarets, forms the principal object of interest in the city, the Hindu Sanskrit College, the chief seat of native learning in India; and you would be pointed to some of the 12,000 houses occupied by Brahmins who subsist upon the alms and voluntary offerings of the pilgrims. You would be not a little surprised to find in every street swarms of beggars really ill or feigning illness—and imploring your help in the most piteous manner. But you might be more surprised [illegible] walking freely about the streets, unattended, or lying indifferently across the public footway, and treated with the greatest consideration and kindness by the inhabitants; or monkeys leaping from point to point of the temple projections, and clinging hither and thither to pagoda roofs. The condition of the city is to be explained by Hindu lore. For Benares is regarded as the sacred city [illegible] is said to form a part of the terrestrial globe, but to be resting upon the point of Shiva's trident; to be entirely secure, therefore, from the

calamity of an earthquake; and to be so holy that all who die within the precincts of the city are sure for the eternal world. Benares is, then, the depository of Hindu learning, the seat of Hindu superstition, the center of Hindu influence. What, then, is Hinduism?

It is affirmed that the system of religion known by this name is of very great antiquity; that, indeed, it can be traced back to days as remote as those of Moses. The earliest of its sacred books, the *Rig-Veda*, is believed to have been written about 1,200 B. C. Like most other systems, changes have been wrought upon it by the lapse of years, so that the religion of Hinduism, as it to-day exists, differs very considerably from that of its earliest form. As Dr. Williams, an able authority upon this subject, has said:* "Starting from the Veda, Hinduism has ended in embracing something from all religions and in presenting phases suited to all minds. It is all-tolerant, all compliant, all-comprehensive, all-absorbing. It has its material and its spiritual aspect, its esoteric and exoteric, its subjective and objective, its rational and irrational, its pure and its impure. It may be compared to a huge polygon, or irregular multilateral figure. It has one side for the practical, another for the severely moral, another for the devotional and imaginative, another for the sensuous and sensual, and another for the philosophical and speculative. Those who rest in ceremonial observances find it all-sufficient; those who deny the efficacy of works, and make faith the one requisite, need not wander from its pale; those who are addicted to sensual objects may have their tastes gratified; those who delight in meditating on the nature of God and man, the relation of matter and spirit, the mystery of separate existence, and the origin of evil, may here indulge their love of speculation. And this capacity for almost endless expansion causes almost endless sectarian divisions even among the followers of any particular line of doctrine." It may be well thought that, with such a diversity and such a comprehensiveness—it is not possible to give an intelligible and succinct description of Hinduism. But, as Dr. Williams has shown, the Vedas are written in Sanskrit, and that language is revered by the Hindu as sacred and believed to have been given to men by a direct voice from heaven. It contains all the Hindu literature; and hence the student of Sanskrit can understand the Hindu's "past and present condition" and "reach the

* *Hinduism*, p. 12. By Monier Williams, C.I.E., D.C.L., &c.

very heart and soul" of the Hindus. Coming to their own books we use their own authorities, and thus approach Hinduism from the Hindus' standpoint.

1. We find *the doctrine of the existence of one Supreme Being*, the source of all things. In the *Rig-Veda* we have words of which the following is a free translation :

> In the beginning there was neither naught nor aught ;
> Then there was neither sky nor atmosphere above.
> What, then, enshrouded all this teeming universe ?
> In the receptacle of what was it contained ?
> Was it enveloped in the gulf profound of water ?
> Then was there neither death nor immortality ?
> Then there was neither day, nor night, nor light, nor darkness,
> Only the Existent One breathed calmly, self-contained,
> Naught else but he there was—naught else above, beyond,
> Then first came darkness hid in darkness, gloom in gloom ;
> Next all was water, all a chaos indiscreet,
> In which the One lay void, shrouded in nothingness.
> Then, turning inwards, he, by self-developed force
> Of inner fervour and intense abstraction, grew.
> First in his mind was formed desire, the primal germ
> Productive, which the wise, profoundly searching, say
> Is the first subtle bond, connecting entity
> With nullity.

Now, you will have observed that this Supreme Being is spoken of as the "Existent One"—"the One;" and we might begin to think that, so far, their view of a Supreme Self-Existent Being is correct and Scriptural. We speak of the "One God." Our Divine Father declared that the "Lord thy God is *One* God." But, upon examination, we find the Hindus use the word "one" in a totally different sense to that in which we employ it. They do not mean *one* in opposition to *many* gods ; but [illegible] no other being whatever. The [illegible] it excludes the possibility of the existence of anything or being that is not Brahm. This supreme deity is represented as "without qualities or attitudes," as, therefore, without intelligence and "without even the consciousness of his own existence." It is no matter of surprise that, being devoid of all qualities or attributes, Brahm exists in a state of profound slumber. This sleep, however, appears to be interrupted after the lapse of

vast ages. Brahm arouses from his slumber, exclaims, "Brahm is," or, "I am," then exerts himself to some great work of creation, and [illegible] his meanwhile in a sleepy condition. The Hindus have no temple in honour of this Supreme Being, nor do they ever offer any [illegible] to him, possibly because they have common sense enough to see that a being so drowsy and so devoid of all qualities and attributes [illegible] could not listen to or grant requests requiring sympathy and help.

Their ideas of the Supreme One are clearly pantheistic, whilst they involve "a subtle theory of evolution and development." Every object in the universe—the stones, grass, trees, flowers, hills, rivers, animals, and men—are manifestations of the essence of Brahm. Step by step, from the meaner to the mightier, he evolved them all from his own person, and they are all part of himself.

2. *But here comes in the belief in a Trinity.*—After Brahm had created the universe, in order to entrust the control thereof to some distinct authorities, just before he relapsed into his profound and unconscious sleep, he evolved from his own eternal essence three divine personages, named Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. These are called by the Hindus the *Trimurti*, or Triad. Brahma is said to be creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. But the functions of these three are interchangeable; one is at liberty to take the place and do the work of the other. Thus one of the first of Indian poets writes—

> In those three persons the one God was shown,
> Each first in place, each last, not one alone;
> Of Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, each may be
> First, second, third, among the blessed three.

Brahma is represented by the Hindus as a golden-coloured figure, with four heads and four arms. It is stated that after several unsuccessful attempts to people the fourteen worlds, which they think form the universe, Brahma sat down and wept, and his teardrops gave birth to a progeny of ghosts and goblins. Brahma became encouraged, and presently [illegible] and from different members of his body there came forth a number of animated beings, and the work of populating the universe was begun. Thus, also, began what is held to be of the highest importance among the Hindus—the distinction of caste. From [illegible] the Brahmans, the highest and most honoured

class. From his arms the military class. From his breast the caste of productive capitalists; and from his foot the Shudra, or servile caste.

Vishnu is the second person of the Hindu Triad, and personifies the process of preservation. In one of the well-known hymns used by the Brahmans, Vishnu is described as "striding through the seven regions of the universe in three steps, and enveloping all things with the dust" of his speedy movement. The majority of Hindus select Vishnu as their deity. They regard him as the God who is peculiarly interested in all their personal and domestic affairs, who is the protector in times of peril, and admit them to his own heaven.

Siva, the third member of the *Trimurti*, has his temples erected generally throughout India. But as *destroyer*, he is too stern, too severe, too strong a God to win the worship of the multitude. Hence the numbers of Hindus who make Siva their chosen divinity are comparatively few. He is said to manifest himself under eight different forms—viz., ether, air, fire, water, earth, sun, moon, and the sacrificing priest.

Each of these three gods is believed to have his consort, or wife, and these are worshipped as goddesses, or as the female half of the God's essence. These goddesses are usually represented as on the left side of the god. Siva became the principal in the Hindu Pantheon, as the most lofty divinity, and consequently his companion and counterpart has become "the one great goddess." It is generally thought by the Hindus that she demands more attention and more propitiation than any other goddess.

The Hindus have some eighteen sacred poems, called Puranas, or "ancient traditions," written with a view to exalt one or other of the three deities to a position of supremacy. In these poems there is the following story. A dispute arose among the sages as to which of the three, Brahma, Vishnu, or Siva, was the greatest. One of the "primeval patriarchs" undertook to determine the point by putting each god to the test. Going first to Brahma he intentionally offered no obeisance, who for a little was indignant at the mark of disrespect, but presently quieted down and overlooked it. He next made his way to the residence of Siva, whom he treated in like manner. Siva waxed indignant, and, lifting his trident, would have struck at the sage, but that his wife the goddess fell at his feet and entreated him to forbear. He lastly

repaired to the abode of Vishnu, and found the god sleeping, with his head resting upon the lap of his consort. Seeing this he impudently kicked Vishnu on the breast. This aroused the god, who, instead of [illegible] blandly asked the reason of the sage for not being awake on his arrival, expressed himself thankful for the blow, and [illegible] lest it was thereby pained. The sage drew his conclusion in the words: Vishnu is "the mightiest god; he overpowers by the most potent of all weapons—gentleness and generosity."

3. *Believing in a Supreme Being, and in a trinity of gods, the Hindus also believe in an incarnation.*—Vishnu, the popular deity, the divine pervader and the preserver, and the second of the Triad, is believed by the Hindus to have had ten principal incarnations. 1. He became a *fish*, to save the progenitor of the human race from the deluge. 2. He became a *tortoise*, to recover certain valuables submerged at the deluge. 3. He became a *boar*, to deliver the world from the power of a demon who had seized the earth and carried it down to the lowest depths of the sea. 4. He became a *man-lion* to deliver the world from the tyranny of a demon who was cruelly domineering over the human race. 5. He became a *dwarf*. 6. *Rama with the axe*. 7. *Rama the mild*. 8. *The dark god*. 9. *Buddah*. 10. *Kalki*, who is yet again to appear on a white horse, with a drawn sword, for the final destruction of the wicked. Of these ten incarnations the eighth is the one of most importance—that wherein Vishnu appears as Krishna—"the dark god." The date of his birth is kept as a great festival among the Hindus. In their temples and houses he is represented as a chubby boy of a dark hue. Eight times each day the votaries of Krishna pay him homage. Flowers, food, and perfumes are presented to the image, whilst the excellences of Krishna are narrated in Sanskrit verses. It is interesting to us Christians to note that the name of Krishna does not occur in the early Vedas. The first intimation of the position of Krishna in Hinduism is that given in a work entitled *Bhavagat-Gita*, a poem, in which is recorded a dialogue between Krishna and the hero Arjuna. This book is attributed to the seventh or eighth century of our era. In it Krishna [illegible] as saying: "I am the source of the evolution and dissolution of the whole universe. There exists no other thing superior to me. On me is all the universe [illegible] as a number of beads on a

string." Arjuna replies: "The universe, O Krishna! is justly delighted with thy glory, and devoted to thee. The evil spirits flee affrighted to the divers quarters of heaven, and all the multitudes of the demi-gods salute thee! And, indeed, why should they not adore thee, O great one! thee, the first creator, more important even than Brahma himself! O infinite king of gods!" There is a strange and suggestive coincidence between the legends of Krishna and the Scripture account of the Christ, which some have supposed to have been the result of the conveyance to India of some of the spurious gospels, which in the early ages of Christianity were numerous. Any way, it strikes us as beyond question that a portion of the Christian teaching must in some form have reached the Hindus, and then have been grafted into their religious system. Indeed, it is impossible to read portions of the *Bhagavat-Gita* without having texts of Scripture suggested to the mind. For example, Krishna is represented as saying—

> Whate'er thou dost perform, whate'er thou eatest,
> Whate'er thou givest to the poor, whate'er
> Thou offerest in sacrifice, whate'er
> Thou doest as an act of holy penance,
> Do all as if to me.

These words strikingly correspond with those of the apostle: "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Again, Krishna is reported as saying—

> I am the Goodness of the Good, I am
> Beginning, Middle, End, Eternal Time,
> The Birth, the Death of All. I am the Symbol A
> Among the characters—

thus reminding us of Christ's words: "I am the first and the last, and have the keys of hell and of death"; "I am Alpha and Omega."

Arjuna, awe-struck at the nature of Krishna, says—

> Show me, then,
> Thy form celestial, most divine of men,
> If haply I may dare to look upon it.

To this Krishna answers—

> Thou canst not bear to gaze upon my shape
> With these thy human eyes.

The question and reply remind us of Moses entreating God to show him His glory, and Jehovah responding, "Thou canst not see My face, for there shall no man see Me and live." Many similar striking parallels might be adduced; but these will suffice to show the probability of some of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures having served to mould Hindu thought and expression. "The Hindu system is like a vast ocean which has received an infinite number of streams, and all we can say is that into some of these streams Christian tributaries, from turbid springs, which have afterward dried up, may possibly have found their way and become absorbed."*

4. Perhaps there is no nation more entirely given up to *idolatry* than that of the Hindus. They not only worship the principal deities whose names I have already mentioned, with their respective wives, but they have shrines with images of divine heroes. One very popular god is named Ganesa. He is represented with an elephant's head, as indicative of his sagacity, and is believed to be the lord of a multitude of malignant imps whose delight it is to throw all manner of obstacles in a person's career. Hence the Hindus usually invoke the favour of this god before commencing any new undertaking. Then there is the *monkey*-god, *Hanuman*. His image is roughly covered with the sacred colour of vermilion. In populous places, like Benares, there are temples to the sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and to the twenty-seven constellations which are believed to divide the moon's path, like our signs of the Zodiac separate the sun's course in astronomical calculations. These important deities are consulted at births, marriages, and all family events of note. Then there are shrines to the goddess of small pox and the goddess of plenty; images of the god of the atmosphere, god of the ocean, god of wealth, god of love, and god of the dead. But these are they that occupy the most conspicuous positions as deities. There are, besides, innumerable objects to which adoration and honour are given. Some 330,000,000 of deities claim the adoration of the people of Hindostan. There is scarcely a thing or being that is not believed to be more or less "permeated by the presence of divinity." The cows, serpents, monkeys, trees, shrubs, stones, rocks, and rivers all come in for some share of superstitious attention. The Ganges is

* Professor Monier Williams. *Hinduism*, p. 221.

deemed the holiest and most efficacious of all rivers. Let the moral character be ever so black, and the sin be ever so great, it is believed that the waters of the Ganges can purify. So the water is transported inland in small bottles, whilst upon the banks of the river are numerous temples, which are under the supervision of priests called "Sons of the Ganges," who, for a consideration, will cleanse the vilest. Then there are many sacred places to which pilgrimages are periodically made. On some special occasions the number of pilgrims is so large that it is not unusual for overcrowding to cause loss of life. At Kattiwar there is a spring pronounced to be sacred, because held to be formed from the perspiration of Krishna's body. Indeed, everything which the ingenuity of men can press into the service of the religious is so treated, and at once invested with superstitious charms.

5. The worship of the Hindus differs very much from that with which we are familiar, in that it is not usual for them to have an orderly service for the collected assembly. They walk round the temple with their right hand studiously kept towards the building. They then enter the vestibule, where usually a bell hangs suspended. They each strike this bell two or three times, and then advance to the shrine of their god, where the officiating Brahman meets them and receives their offerings. They then prostrate themselves, muttering at the same time a brief prayer. If they do not repeat a prayer they lift their hand to their forehead. Their devotions are then concluded and they leave the temple. The whole process of worship is over in a few minutes, and there is a constant going to and fro of the devotees.

But, in addition to these visits to the shrine of their favoured deity, the Hindus adopt other means for pleasing the object of their worship. They rehearse for weeks or months together the legends which narrate the history of their god, and accompany the narration by dancing and music. They dig wells to quench the thirst of travellers, or they plant trees to afford shade. They give feasts to the Brahmans, when they spread their boards with the richest luxuries. They go on long and wearisome pilgrimages to spots that have been consecrated by the gods. And not infrequently they have committed suicide by leaping over precipices or into sacred rivers.

6. *The Hindus believe in transmigration.* — They hold that every human soul must pass through eighty-four lakhs of births, a lekh being

one hundred thousand. Thus the soul is doomed to pass through millions of bodily forms before it can enjoy the freedom and happiness it desires. There are three kinds or stages of bliss, and three kinds or stages of future punishment. To escape the punishment and secure some advancement in the next birth three classes of duties are defined. To be promoted one step higher after death there must be a rigid observance of the regulations as to caste, combined with the ordinary attention to religious duties. To be promoted to the second stage and enjoy the carnal delights of the home of one of the gods, there must be the performance of some extraordinary act for the benefit of the gods. But to be elevated to the highest stage and rendered worthy of complete union with and absorption by Brahm, there must be constant and rigid austerity of life, an earnest search after divine knowledge, and constant meditation upon things sacred. If these three requirements be neglected, the soul must pass through the gradations of punishment. For sins of act the soul re appears on earth in a vegetable or mineral form; for sins of word he is doomed to dwell in the form of a bird or beast; and for sins of thought he must possess the body of a man of the lowest caste. The acme of future bliss after which every Hindu longs is absorption into the essence of the supreme god, Brahm, so that "the heavens of the Hindu system are only steps on the road to final beatitude."

When a man dies his body is burned, unless he has been a great ascetic or a "holy man," when, if such, he is generally buried. Usually, however, the body is cremated. As the Hindus believe that the soul cannot quit the body without some kind of a vehicle, they believe that there is a body about the size of the human thumb provided, in which the soul hovers near the spot of cremation, and is called a *pretra*, or ghost. The soul is then in a restless and comfortless state. So the friends observe funeral rites for ten days after death, believing that they thereby sooth the departed spirit, and furnish it with an intermediate body in which it can be capable of pleasure or pain, and make progress through the temporary heaven or temporary hells — of which there are twenty-one — to other reappearances and ultimate entire emancipation.

Such, then, is a brief, and necessarily imperfect, description of Hinduism. Much more might be said in depicting the faith, forms, and festivals of this ancient system; but I have said enough to prove that

the Hindus live up to the light they possess, and that very much of their system has a resemblance to, if it be not borrowed from, the teaching of our own Scriptures. The Hindus are a peculiarly interesting people to work among, and the experience of the last half-century suffices to show that the work amongst them is most encouraging. It is not very long since pilgrims to the number of nearly one million and a half in one year made pilgrimages to the temple of the idol Juggernaut, and thousands died each year by voluntarily submitting to be crushed by the idol's car. It is not very long since *Suttee* was practised to such an extent that in Bengal alone as many as seventy females have, in two months, been burnt upon their husband's funeral pile; but now, throughout the British possessions in India, *Suttee* has been abolished; Juggernaut has lost his prey; infanticide to a considerable extent been suppressed; infanticide has been extensively checked; schools, colleges, and hospitals have been opened; and missionaries of the varied religious bodies of this country have established themselves among the people. The London Missionary Society has in North India 15 English missionaries, 5 female missionaries, 3 ordained native pastors, and 22 native preachers, with scholars in our schools to the number of 4,000. In South India we have 20 English missionaries, 3 female missionaries, 14 ordained native pastors, 108 native preachers, with nearly 6,000 scholars in training in our schools. Latterly a new class of workers has entered the mission-field in India. I refer to the Female Medical Missions. Young women, whose hearts the Lord has touched, have been trained for the practice of medicine, and have thus prepared themselves for work among the women of India. Many such are labouring most successfully, some who once attended this church and received their medical training in Dr Griffiths' "Zenana and Medical Mission Training School." They are obtaining, by their skill, access to the homes of the women of India, and seize every opportunity of speaking of Jesus.

Sirs, it must be a matter of gratitude and gladness to every Christian heart that the idolatrous system of Hinduism is gradually being undermined by the Gospel. The Christian worker in India has much to encourage him. He has also much in his favour. He can refer to the Hindu belief in a Supreme Being, and then advance upon that foundation to show the infinite superiority of the God whom we worship to Brahm. He can point to the Hindu belief in a trinity, and then advance

to show how the Trinity of the Sacred Scripture—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—transcends the Triad of Hinduism. He can allude to the Hindu belief in the incarnation of Vishnu in the person of Krishna, and then, in most effective and affecting terms, tell the story of the real Incarnation, when the Son of the Eternal God became a Babe in Bethlehem, when Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, lived, laboured, languished, and died for us. In the story of Jesus and His love the heart of the Hindu finds rest, as does the heart of the Englishman, and the more simply and clearly Christ is preached the more readily will the idolaters of India awake to the fact that they have been trusting in rude shadows of the Divine reality.

Whilst thankful to God that the light of Christian truth has been given us, and that we are made, as a people, the instruments of conveying that truth to others, let us not be neglectful of our obligations. Let us give ourselves, our sympathies, our prayers, and our offerings to the work which brave and God-fearing men and women consecrate their days to perform in India.

REFUSING A LEGACY.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK HASTINGS.

MATTHEW XXVII, 6.

"And, the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood."

THE result of the act of Judas startled himself with its terrible consequences. He, like many others, was unable to conceive the evil wrapped up in his actions until he saw them developed. He showed the power of conscience in one apparently hopeless. Those who saw him with the priests, and afterwards with the band of soldiers, would not have thought it possible that he would ever have repented of his act. Conscience seemed dead. When, however, he saw what his act had brought upon Jesus, his conscience escaped from its temporary hiding-place. It lashed him with the energy of ten thousand furies. The silver soon ceased to be a salve. After he received the bribe, and committed his act of treachery, he speedily began to repent. He doubtless counted it over to see whether the priests had not defrauded him. Scarcely had he finished when the murmurings of accusation are heard. At first they are like the very distant rumblings of an approaching storm. The sound grows louder and louder. The lightnings flash around him. [illegible] breaking in pieces the rocks. Every roll of the thunder bears, as its burden, doom. Conscience [illegible] threatening to wrench him from his body. His remorse is so great that lurid thoughts of suicide flash ever and anon across his mind. The thoughts become acts. But ere the dead moment of suicide comes he will perform another part. He will confess the wrong, but he will accuse his tempters. He becomes a preacher for the last time. He was not unaccustomed to the work. His audience this time was distinguished and select. The priests were unwilling auditors. His text was similar to that of Saul: "I have sinned." The sermon was a warning. The application was this: "If I have

sinned, what have not you done?" An act most powerful in expressiveness accompanied the words. He cast down the money received. They were like molten lead on his palm. He left the pieces, for they would have a chance to cool on the marble pavement of the temple.

1 *An illustration of the lack of conscience on the part of the professedly religious* is seen in the treatment of a guilty soul. Judas bad as he was, was not so bad as those to whom he spoke. He had some conscience left; they had none. They consulted about the money; but not the man. Professedly religious, they were intolerably and intensely selfish. Self and position were more to them than penitence, principle, or piety. These men were priests. Hence they should have rejoiced in the confession of Judas. They ought to have congratulated one another that he had come in time, not only to save himself but to save Jesus. Surely they will hasten to stay further consequences of their mistake and his crime. They do not admit the mistake, but towards the penitent Judas and the innocent Jesus they are alike merciless. Hear their laconic reply to Judas: "What is that to us? See thou to it." Ah, sophistry! It was a great deal to them. They were involving themselves deeper by those very words. They conceived—so perverted had become their intellects and their hearts—that responsibility only attached to the immediate doer of an act and not to the promoters of it. By removing it one step back they thought they had shifted the burden. They had, however, to bear their share of it. They could not escape from the shadow of complicity in the murder of Jesus. Even as priests they ought not to have stood heartlessly by and have seen another drawn into sin and suffering, without saying, "We have to do with that, we must strive to remedy that." "See thou to that" is their conclusion. They discard their tool. He had served their ends and now is flung aside. But Judas was not so easily disposed of. The priests could not make him shoulder all the guilt. Annoyed, doubtless, they betake themselves to a select portion in the Temple, withdrawing to the part into which it is not lawful for any but priests to enter. Thus they will be rid of his painful remindings. Judas, however, follows them, and, flinging himself on the floor, with arms stretched and piteous tones, he cries, "I have sinned. Take back your self—your hateful self—and O, give me back my peace!" The cry rings through those courts. Others will hear it. The priests

shudder at contact with such a wretch and at words so outrageous. "Let us leave him. We shall be defiled, and so shut out from holy services at this season. Leave him! Leave him! Enter the inner chamber! Shut to the doors!" Further into the sacred precincts they press. They are safe now. He may not pass the barrier; but he flings the money after them. Jerked into the court the pieces go rattling hither and thither on the marble floor with a dread, unpleasant ring. Every clink is an accusation to them.

Judas regrets his sin; but regret and all the amends he can make cannot stave off the evil consequences. He repents; but Christ will still be crucified. He hurries away; but he feels all the lighter for having rid himself of the once envied, and now hated, silver. After all, he is less to be pitied than those conscienceless, sanctimonious priests.

There lies the silver in the Temple. Who shall touch it? Soon after the first looks of pious horror they begin to ask, What shall we do with it. Willingly would they have put it into the treasury, but for several difficulties. Preconceived ideas, the result of Pharisaic training, can not be put easily aside.

These unprincipled men remember that the silver is, in fact, the "price of blood." It is the earthly estimate of that which is of infinite value. They paid thirty pieces to get rid of God's best gift. Evidently it was the full reward, and not the mere earnest money, which they had agreed to pay Judas for his time and trouble in betraying Christ. Hence they saw attached to them also the stain of another's guilt. Those pieces are the reward of a man of blood. They have belonged to such a wretch that it would be contamination to other silver in the treasury to throw them therein.

One of the priests who generally liked to finger money, one who had "an itching palm for gold," has picked up a few pieces, and holds them gingerly as though fearing the blood stain would soak through into his own nature. Those thirty pieces of silver what had they been?—in whose hands? They had possibly been in the treasury before. They may have mingled with the widow's mite. It might even be among them. Yea, the stater which Peter took at command of Christ from the fish's mouth may have been also among them. It had been tribute paid by the Divine, and is now the "price of blood." That silver

or golden coin in your purse, what has it been? Where? It may have paid for lawful service, or it may have fostered scheming. It may have been the reward of integrity or the wages of iniquity; the pay of assiduous study or the price of an assassin's stab. So those pieces of silver in the priest's hand, about the disposal of which there is much perplexity and hesitation, had been the gifts of devotion and the gain of depravity. But can moral qualities or guilt attach to the physical? Moral qualities attach only to the spiritual, not to the material. The dagger of the assassin, which has let loose the life blood of the good, or the block on which has been hatched the reek of some tyrant, is only horrible from association of ideas. A gaol, as we pass it, may seem to us a very embodiment of the guilt that has been confined within. The blackened stones from Newgate's walls seem to cry out one against the other, as though accusing each other of guilt; but there is no evil in them. From the dagger a penknife might be made; or, unchanged, it might strike for liberty. The block might become part of a throne. The stones of a Newgate might hereafter enter into the building of a church. Man, however, is not always changed by change of place. His character is inherent: his acts contract their connection and identity with himself. He cannot shake them off. They are like the robe with which Hercules arrayed himself, and from which the poison of the Lernæan hydra penetrated into his very bones. He writhed and leaped and plunged in his efforts to disengage himself from it, but in vain. So evils penetrate into the nature of man where there is the suitable receptive quality of spirit. We may strive to pull it out, but, unaided by Divine power, it is impossible.

There are those who account this world accursed on account of the sin man has committed on its surface. It may be, in great part, the image and superscription of guilt. It may appear unfit to go into the treasury of God's universe and to be numbered among the stars that "He called by their names." Many believe that it will only be purified by the fire of spiritual truth. When humanity is purified and all hearts renewed by God's spirit, we shall then see that the world has no longer evil staining it or stamping itself into it. It will be seen to be such as God Himself views with gladness, and in which man can dwell with delight. It was the object of Christ's life, the aim of His established truth, to create a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth right

eousness. This shall come to pass one day; then shall there be rejoicing because the tabernacle of God will be with men.

II. We have been pursuing these reflections; but the money thrown by Judas has still to be disposed of. Let us look now at the schemes of the conscienceless to get rid of an unwelcome legacy. If a legacy were left to us, we should probably wish to retain it. Not so these men. Slowly it is accepted on trust. One or two pieces are taken up; but the rest lie scattered about the floor of the Temple. What shall be done with them? Shall they be swept out and left to the poor and profane to pick up? Surely those Pharisaic priests will not soil their fingers with it! Will they not? See them take the silver up and deliberate as to what to do with this unceremonious, roughly-conveyed, unexpected, and somewhat inconvenient legacy. They meet when their hands are free of Christ, and when there is a lull in the Temple service, to settle the point. "And now, how about those thirty pieces of sliver?" says one, who opens the discussion. "Pity—great pity!—to waste them; we must not be unmindful of the interests of the Temple." "Throw them into the treasury," says another, who is not troubled with any qualms as to its being the price of blood; "if any swearing by the gold of the Temple is a debtor, surely this money may be used for its support? It has, in fact, been bequeathed to the Temple."

"What matters," says a third, "what purpose it has formerly served? It will serve a good end now." "But, then, it is the price of blood," says a fourth; "and our second book of the law [Deut. xxiii. 18] forbids that we shall bring even 'the price of a dog into the house of the Lord our God.' How much less may we put into the treasury this, which is the price of the Blasphemer, whom, to the glory of the God of Israel, and spite of the obstinate Pastor, we have succeeded in crucifying! Shall we put into our sacred treasury the possession of that despicable wretch who was willing to take it as the bribe of betrayal? My advice is to cast it away over the parapet into Kedron, and let it perish."

Another here rises and suggests that it may be well to cause it to be melted over again, and thus get out the stain. He argues that as the gold and silver of Jericho came into the treasury, and as the censers of Korah and his company were made into brazen plates for the altar, so

this might be used for the service of the Lord, and the offering be as a "sweet smelling savour" to the Majesty on High.

"Horrible!" ejaculates, probably, Joseph of Arimathea. We suppose another here to rise and propose that they should purchase with it something of use to the Temple.

"Nay," says Caiaphas, the ruler of the Sanhedrim—that master of shuffle and expediency—"that would not be expedient; better do something with it that will gain us the reputation for benevolence and save our consciences at the same time."

"Buy the potter's parcel of ground," says a venerable rabbi from the corner of the council-room, who had been in close consultation with blind Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Judas had commenced negotiations for it, and they were as suddenly broken off as was the rope with which he hung himself. It could be bought for just the thirty pieces he brought back, as by his suicide in it the value is lessened. Moreover, it is certainly not worth more. It has been well worked in past time, and there is little clay left therein.

"Good suggestion!" "Bright thought!" "Capital device!" was doubtless the murmur that rose from various parts of that council-chamber. Priests will thus keep within the law, but secure their consciences and personal advantage at the same time. How conscientious were these unprincipled men! Henceforth they will have no more difficulty about burying the Gentile dogs dying in the city, or of finding recipients for the legacy they would not accept. A deputation waits speedily upon the owner to secure the parcel of almost useless ground. They find the owner most willing to sell it for the exact amount of the legacy of Judas. The vendor who had thought that he would not obtain the money for the field Judas had purchased with the reward of his iniquity is delighted that, after all, he is not a loser by the death of the man of Kerioth. The priests congratulate themselves on their acuteness in buying with the "reward of iniquity" that which had been the place of suicide of the betrayer. They think that society will never know that they had bought it in order to get rid of the inconvenient legacy; but the truth of it oozed out, and public opinion stamped it rightly as Aceldama—the field of blood. This name was perpetually attached, and thus was fulfilled the remarkable words in which this result was foretold, "And I said unto them, If ye think good give me

my price and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter : a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." (Zech. xi 12, 13.)

III. Notice how direst sin and conscienceless scheming are overruled by Christ. The transmuting power of Him who is the Lord of Conscience is certainly seen in this transaction. He transmutes bad deeds and overrules them. Everything coming in contact with him is benefited. The betrayal of His life becomes to strangers and outcasts, dying in the streets of Jerusalem, a great boon. A cemetery is provided for them ; and the cross intended for shame becomes the symbol of Christian faith. The sneering and scoffing in the epithets "Nazarene," "Galilean," "Christian," are taken up and fashioned into a crown of glory. So every man coming near to Christ is changed ; the evil sinks, the good in his nature is raised. So, also, the world shall be changed one day by Him. We see a hint of this, and of the far-reaching effects of His death, in the act of the Empress who caused as many as two hundred and seventy shiploads of earth from that field of blood to be carried to Pisa. Some is said to be in the Campo Santo, also at Rome, and more even reached Pisa, as ballast in [illegible] of the Innocents. Some of that earth is enclosed at Pisa by most costly cloisters, and it is thought the greatest privilege to be allowed to be buried therein. In fact, it is only possible by royal permission. Moreover, the soil is said entirely to decompose, in less than forty-eight hours, all flesh that might be in it. The evils of the world shall, as this tradition hints, be transmuted and made to disappear. Christ has spilled His blood for the world and [illegible] world. He will transmute its shining sins into sincere service, its dull guilt into unmerited glory. Christ's life and death have purchased rest for those who are strangers to the mercy of God and aliens from the commonwealth of the spiritual Israel. As in Christ's day rejected and contemned taxgatherers and those of loose lives went into the kingdom of heaven before the pretended pious and outwardly respectable, so has it been ever since. Many a soul feeling the burden of life, many a heart-broken waif dying in the streets of the city or high up in its neglected garrets, or choking in the waters of the river, seeking thus blindly to wash out sin, may yet find rest in

Christ. The Aceldama of such souls becomes changed, through Christ, into a resting-place. But for the men coming face to face with truth, but rejecting its claims; for the men hardening their hearts against Christ; for the men straining at gnats and swallowing camels; for the men who profess to be conscientious but are ravening wolves, what can purchase rest? For those men who live impurely while standing under the very cross, what real rest can they have? Ah, there are none so hopeless, none whose lives are so hard to transmute, none whose hearts are so hard to change, as the men who are careful about outward conduct, punctilious on minor points, who are bound by bigotry, who strain conscience to the last extremity, who strive to keep within law, but who are without principle. They seem to think that if they can only keep from the commission of any outward wrong all will be well! These are difficult to move. What a revelation to themselves will come when death tears off the coverings of their deceit!

We see, from the doings of these Judean priests, that it is possible to be anxious about the welfare of God's house, the support of the sanctuary, the observances of law, and yet have deep evil in the soul. Those proud and bigoted religionists yielded to their desire to retain "place and nation," yielded to their envy and hate of goodness, so as to crucify the blameless Jesus. They were anxious about the "mint, and anise, and cummin;" but they neglected the weightier matters of justice, truth, and mercy. We see how they could dispose of that which another left—how little they did for the strangers themselves! They appeared generous, but they were selfish. They gave that which cost them nothing. We never really give to God unless there is some self-denial in the giving. We must feel the giving. There are many who give even trifles—"mites," coppers—who are approved of God as much as if they gave thirty pieces of silver. The man who knows not how to spare the mite he gives to any object does far more than the man who may give his thousands to some hospital. Such even give for amusement at times. Said one of the Rothschilds once, "I sometimes give a sovereign to a beggar for the pleasure of seeing his looks of surprise." What is it to such to give? But where we have to deny ourselves, and, perhaps, scheme and "screw" to give, we then not only win the approval of loved ones, but the commendation of the Saviour. The priests were very generous, but at another's cost.

Looking back over our course of thought, we would say : Let us, at least, avoid betraying our Master. Let us never give the salute of the lips and then the smite of the palm. Let us be faithful to Him to whom we have given ourselves. Let us never have to fling down the result of life's work, saying, "Useless, useless!" Let us never have consciences that are conscienceless. Let us never become hardened in bigotry and pride. Let our stony hearts be changed and our seared consciences be softened by the power of God's Holy Spirit. And let our souls, which would have possibly been as a waste—worked-out potter's field—become, by the power of the betrayed, crucified, and now risen Christ, as a garden of the Lord.

THROUGH THE CORN-FIELDS.

BY THE REV. G. T. COSTER.

MARK II, 23.

"Through the corn-fields on the Sabbath-day."

PALESTINE was "the land of wheat." Of Judah's trade in wheat we read a thousand years before our Lord. And a thousand years before that we come on the first record of this wholesome and necessary grain. And still the fields ripen into gold. And no ancient field was more bright with instructive beauty and value than ours to-day. Again the corn is growing ripe for the reaping, and soon the reaper will be busy. Are we bidden, "consider the lilies?" Let us (it will be in season) consider the corn ripening to harvest. As did our Lord in person, so let us in thought, with meditative mind, go "through the corn-fields on the Sabbath-day." Looking out on the fields of wheat we see—

I. *Unity in Variety.*—To the unaccustomed eye the wheat seems one, and yet it is various. There is the white wheat, there is the red wheat, and beneath these, varieties and sub-varieties in great number. In fields where the crops seem purest, the many varieties will be shown in the different period of flowering, and in the earlier ripening of some ears to others. And yet what unity in the variety! How like every ear to every other! And the corn in every ear food for man.

Variety, too, meets us as we look out on the vast field of humanity. Various the features and forms of men, step, pose of head, tone of voice, power and expression of eye. In those bound by nearest kinship, and likest each other, what slight, it may be, yet undeniable differences; there is the family likeness. There is the national type; and in a few generations the descendant of the emigrant approaches to the facial expression of the people of his adoption. How like to that of the vanished and vanishing Indians the countenance of the American citizen!

What mental varieties, too, mark the race of man! Between the mind of the unlettered ploughman and that of the starry Newton, what a gulf! And, even among men of ability, what variety in the ability! It is so with Christian folk as well as others. "There are diversities of gifts," and diversities of experience. Andrew's gift fitted him for quiet; Peter's for public and eminent usefulness. James soon drank the cup of martyrdom. John long tarried among men to bear his testimony for Christ. It is so still. Christian men and women sing the same holy songs, tread the same path of prayer, read the same Divine record, and yet no experience exactly corresponds to any other.

Yet what unity in the variety! One hand has shaped us all; one bread is the common food; one wing of Providence protects us. The Gospel is glad tidings to all people. "One is our Master, even Christ."

Around Him there gathered on the heights of Bethsaida a great multitude—men and women, varied as to class, age, temperament, experience; but all were united by a common hunger, and all were fed by the one barley bread. But a stronger bond bound them together—a common spiritual hunger—and the same bread of heavenly truth was offered to each of those "five thousand men, besides women and children."

In Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free." In Him "all we are brethren." The nearer we draw to Him, the nearer we draw to each other. As His truth prevails, men will love as brethren. War-drums shall throb no longer. Battle-flags shall be furled. And nations, now parted by rivalry and strife, shall be united into a neighbourhood of common interest, into a brotherhood of common life and love. Happy future when men shall realise and rejoice in their unity! Future suggested to us by the wheat as we go, in meditation, "through the corn-fields on the Sabbath-day."

II. *Fruitfulness through Death* is taught us by the fields of wheat. The corn-seed, hard, arid, seems little likely, had we no experience to encourage us to faith, to come to the wealth of harvest.

And it is reached only through death. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." All that surrounds the vital centre, the germinant principle, must corrupt and drop away. If not it abides alone—is a single grain of wheat and nothing more. Through its black and decay-

ing root strikes the tiny life its root, and rises upward in blade and ear. Therein is a Parable of Christ's Death!

He died. His body placed by reverent hands in the grave was left like "a corn of wheat" in the darkness. To His grief-amazed, hopeless friends it seemed buried for ever. But from that grave what a glorious birth—what eternal harvest of blessing! It was well He should have died! well that He should have been buried! well that, victorious over death, He should rise from the dead. By the grace of God He tasted death for every man. He rose that we might rise with Him into a heavenly life.

His resurrection is suggested to us by the summer corn-fields; His and ours. He is the first-fruits of them that sleep. We shall rise. His resurrection assures us of ours.

Little promise does the grain of wheat give of its beautiful resurrection beyond death. And little promise is there, in the face of our dead, of the glory and bloom of immortal youth into which they shall rise. Look at the corn-seed; "thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

"God's Acre," was the name given by our Saxon fathers to the grave-yard. They drew the appellation from God's Book; the words of St. Paul had entered into their imagination and heart. At burial the body, like the corn-seed, is sown; the harvest is the end of the world. Then into instant view and beauty shall the silent dust quicken at the Almighty voice, and "this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality."

The world is a vast "unwalled grave-yard." Where are not the dead?

> Take the wings
> Of morning and the Barcan desert pierce,
> Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
> Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
> Save his own dashings—yet, the dead are there.

And how many loved by us have passed from us? The dear semblance, the beautiful form in which the spirit was enshrined, and

through which it glowed to us and gladdened us that, like corn sown, is buried in the earth. It is in God's Acre—in His keeping.

Mourner, you have been to the grave. To God's field; remember that. The body of the "dear one dead," seed-like, you have been sowing there. But hear the voice of the ripening corn-field to-day. It says, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be." The field of burial shall become the field of resurrection. The darkness and dishonour of corruption shall become [illegible] glory. The burial fleet is God's field.

> Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
> In the sure faith that we shall rise again
> At the great harvest.

Comforting thoughts of resurrection come to us as we meditate "through the corn-fields on the Sabbath-day."

III. *The Permanence of Character* is suggested to us by the ripening fields of wheat. The harvest is the harvest of the grain sown; barley yielding barley, wheat wheat. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

That is a law in the moral as well as in the agricultural world. "He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." As we sow, we reap. As men have sown, so are they reaping. Did they sow the wild oat? They are reaping the wild oat in sorrow, weakness, shame. Did they sow the pure grain of a holy life? They are reaping peace, gladness, the first-fruits of life everlasting.

The aged, Christian man, calm, patient, growing golden-ripe for the Reaper was not always calm and patient, not always golden with the graces of Christian excellence. He has come through many troubles: has known many fightings and fears. Sharp has been his conflict with sin, but he has been in conflict with it. Through many years he has been sowing to the spirit, and now he reaps correspondent harvest.

Paul knew the difficulty as well as joy of living to the Lord. He was often troubled, perplexed, cast down. He feared lest at the last he should be a castaway. But see him an aged man. Now he has come to the reaping. No fear now. No dread of proving a castaway now. He can rejoice in tribulation. In view of martyrdom he can say, "I am ready to be offered." The stress of the Christian life, the keen conflict

with indwelling sin, the tears, agonies, strivings have come to firm serenity, to high assured confidence.

Then what are we sowing? The seed has a permanent character. As it is, so will be the harvest. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

A man may be a saved man and yet to life's end a maimed and suffering man because of his sin. Many a Christian man carries in his bones the sins of his youth. Many a successful Christian worker has his joy clouded by the painful memory of lost opportunities—of the evil influence he once exerted—and which, to all his prayers irrevocable, lives on and on in baleful results far away beyond all recall.

The sower goes forth to sow that which he would reap. Then, as we would reap let us sow. What are we really sowing? What words, what deeds? We shall "find them again after many days."

A man may be a converted man—but his words, passing from mouth to mouth, and far off from him, and he, the first speaker of them forgotten or unknown, will remain unconverted. On what a journey a foul or selfish word may go! How defiling and hardening in sin! And in what a harvest to be resultant!

> The deeds we do, the words we say—
> Into the still air they seem to fleet,
> We count them ever past
> But they shall last,
> In the dread judgment, they
> And we shall meet.

"Then cometh harvest." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

IV. *The vast Productiveness of Good* is suggested by the fields of wheat.

Some seeds sown perish. Others are caught away by the birds. But others "fall into good ground, and bring forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold." It is a great result. *Many* from one! So it is in the field of the world, in the field of the individual soul.

Christianity in the earth was once like a handful of corn. It was incorruptible. It grew and thrived in storms. A divine, immortal life was in it. Instruments of torture could not uproot it. Martyr-blood

could not flood it away. It flourished from clime to clime. And to-day the "handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountain," where it was little likely to grow, has come to "fruit" that "shakes like Lebanon,"—wrestling with opposing winds like the strong cedars. Christ, "the corn of wheat," has died into great, world-feeding harvest!

Let His truth lodge in a soul, and into what benificent results it may rise! Many a benevolent institution is the "much" and abiding "fruit" of a word. It was a good word, a heavenly seed. The request of a dying man, "Care for my children," was the seed from which sprung the varied philanthropies known as Ambrose Read's life. The question of a lowly woman was the good seed from which grew the great and ever-expanding harvest of Sunday-schools. What vitality and productiveness in a single good seed!

Begin a work for God. It may be inconspicuous enough; but who can tell to what it may strengthen and ripen? The hand that sowed it may moulder in dust. The sower may pass from human remembrance. But the work shall grow, and grow—to the refreshment and manifold blessing of many. The great Lord of the Harvest keeps note of the sowers, as well as reapers; and at length, in His presence, sowers and reapers shall come into mutual acquaintance, and all rejoice together.

What vitality in the seed! The corn-seed perhaps of an ancient harvest; the seed that has been clenched from the light and the field-furrow in a mummy's hand through long, dull millenniums. But the life still lives in it. And though buried and unsympathising, planted, it will spring up and "yield," far from its Egyptian birth-place, "much fruit."

So with the seed-like word of truth. It may be a text of Scripture—the remembered verse of a child's hymn—a fond mother's last word—an earnest, brief appeal. It may seem utterly gone—lost in "the backward and abysm of time." But it is in the memory. And far away in the lone watch at sea, or in the emigrant'a hut, or when the child has become the grey-haired man bowing to the grave, it will spring up. It will pierce the heart's rock. The rock will be broken. The man will weep his way back into the child, and the child will go to the long-forgotten Father!

The seed—pure, loving words and deeds—is God's seed. He will care for it. It is "precious" to Him. Let us, with no niggard spirit,

scatter it; we cannot tell which may prosper. We may be the "one" that "soweth;" but we shall share in the joy of the reaper.

Thou canst not toil in vain;
Cold, heat, the moist and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky.

"Ye shall reap if ye faint not."

V. *Human Dependence* is taught us by the corn-fields. Man breaks up the fallow ground; the man is the sower that goes forth to sow, but God makes the seed. He folds in each the marvel of life. He evolves it into down-striking root and up-rising blade. He shelters it from storm and mildew. He sheds to the thirsty grain the rain convenient for it. He pours upon the fields the ripening light. He, He alone "giveth the increase."

How he reminds us of our dependence! And, if the elements seem unpropitious, how ready we are to beseech His pity, more ready than to celebrate His praise.

So it is in the higher industries. We may speak the word of truth, scatter the incorruptible seed broadcast. But we cannot make hearts receptive of it; we cannot make the good seed to spring up. That power cometh from above.

No deep ploughing, no soul enriching chemical constituents, no agricultural watchfulness and anxiety will avail to make "fields white to harvest." The sun says, "You need me." The cloud say, "You need me." God's sunshine—God's rains.

We are shut up to Him. He must work in us by His spirit, if we—any of us—are to be a fruitful field. He prepares the field, gives the seed, and is Lord of the Harvest. From each of our hearts and lives may He gather many a sheaf to His eternal praise! And may He accept this, our brief journey of thought—our meditation through the corn-fields on the Sabbath day.

GLITTER AND VARNISH.

BY THE REV GEORGE W. M'CREE.

"Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?" (A. V.) "Ye look at things that are before your face." (Revised Ver.)

THOUSANDS of us do this. When we are in shallow and foolish moods of minds we do so. We forget that glitter and varnish are not pure gold and solid oak.

Thus, two men—I mention a real case—were traveling through some fine scenery. One of them had three thousand pounds a year: the other not so much. Had you seen them that morning, you would, perhaps, have said: "There is a man worth three thousand a year—how free from care he must be." But the outward appearance is deceptive, for he suddenly says to his friend, "I have seven separate worries gnawing at my heart." You see he counted his "worries." He had seven, the perfect and mystical number. Is that your experience? If so, then hear the words which are in the Book of Job: "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for He maketh sore, and bindeth up: He woundeth, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Bind that promise to your heart, and rest in the Lord for ever. And, henceforth, when you see a rich man, envy him not, but wait upon God.

Thus, again, a merry company once assembled in the house of a quaint old Cornish squire. There were present—travelers, antiquarians, linguists, actors, clergymen, financiers, and senators. A merry company were they! Yes; but roses have thorns, harps get out of tune, bowls [illegible] sometimes storms make fair gardens a desolate wilderness, and many feel [illegible] go home to weep alone in the bitterness of their hearts. And that night saw another scene. One of that company went—not home—but to a beautiful common, a few miles

from St. Paul's. There he poured some deadly poison into a silver claret jug, and drank it to the dregs, and in a few moments he lay dead, with his white face under the solemn gaze of the great stars of God. His fate was foretold long, long ago when an inspired prisoner in Rome wrote these words: "For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some have coveted after, they have erred from the truth, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Judge not, then, the reveller by his outward appearance; for he is often the most miserable of men.

There is sometimes a painful silence in prayer-meetings when brethren are requested to offer prayer. Whence that silence? Is it because you can not offer a fine and a long prayer? Alas! Is it so? Is God then pleased with only fine prayers and long prayers? Surely God, the merciful and gracious, will listen as of old to the prayer, "God, be merciful to me a sinner?" A simple prayer is sweet to Him. A loving prayer is all He wants. A believing prayer will move Him as a child's cry to its father. Does the Lord, think you, desire glitter and varnish in our prayers?

> Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
> Odours of Eden, and offerings divine?
> Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
> Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
>
> Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
> Vainly with gold would His favor secure:
> Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
> Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Pour out, then, your simple prayers. Tell God, in childlike phrase, your daily wants, and He will answer you. And, brethren, sit not in cold and critical judgment on each other's prayers, but say "Amen!" to every simple petition which you may hear from unfeigned lips.

There are those in our churches who are well-known to all. Their voices are heard in the streets. Pulpits and platforms know their footsteps. Their names are in the *Times*, in entertainment-programmes, on flaming posters, and they are called "the leaders of men." Are they, therefore, the chiefest of all saints? I judge them not. Only let me say that, when I look for the most perfect exemplars of a divine life I

go not to peers, parliaments, platforms, and pulpits. No; I go into a humble home, where the loaf is small, the wages low, the child sick, the parents honest and devout and filled with the love of Christ; and I say to myself; "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Yes; this humble home is the gate of heaven.

There is a rage just now for "big things" in Christian work. Hence, a well-known temperance advocate demanded a carriage and pair to meet him at the railway station. Noise, reporters, banners, uniforms, tambourines, choirs, and testimonials are things prized by some who call themselves "the Lord's workers." Ah! glitter and varnish, publicity and glare, processions and trumpets, are not always best for the soul. Quietness of life, private prayer, silent deeds of love, patience in affliction, and diligence in home duties are, in the sight of God, of great price. "Show piety at home," said the Apostle Paul.

Much importance is sometime attached to demonstrative conversions by not a few of our sensational orators. I believe in the miraculous conversion of Saul of Tarsus, but I believe also in the conversion of Mary who sat still at the feet of Jesus, and simply "heard His word." The dew makes no noise as it falls on the tender grass, and maketh it fresh and green; and "I will be as the dew," saith the Lord. Fear not, therefore, ye humble souls, because you were not converted in the midst of thunder and lightning, trumpets and crowds. The "clean heart" and the "right spirit" are of God, and not of men. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and no conversion so-called, is a true conversion when these "fruits" are absent. Do you love Jesus? That is the question.

Any one can gild a piece of iron, and varnish over a slab of wood, but real work, honest work, enduring work is what God requires. Jacob's well is—say—four thousand years old, and it gives sweet water still. Never consent then, in business, to do wretched work. Be a true artist even in humble things. Even a cheap thing should be a good thing. But, in God's workshop there must be no cheapness, no scampering, no hurry, no failure, if by any means perfection be attainable. Mere glitter and varnish must have no place there.

What a perfect worker is Christ! "The blood of Jesus Christ

cleanseth us from all sin." "All sin?" Yes, "all sin." If not, "all sin," then was the Lord's work not "finished;" and that can not be, for He brought in an everlasting righteousness. Be like Him, then. Do real work. Do some "finished" thing. Do not bring glitter and varnish to Jesus. He asks for your whole heart. We are to be His alone. Yes; He waits for some beautiful thing, like unto "an alabaster box of ointment—very precious," and nothing less than our utmost will be acceptable in His sight.

It is well for us to do something in the sight of all. We have these words to guide us: "Let your light shine before men." Yes; let it shine like a candle, a lamp, a beacon, a sun. It cannot shine too splendidly in dark places. And yet beware of glitter and varnish, of the ostentatious and superficial even then. Who can tell how Jesus esteems the private deeds of love, the secret tear of penitence, the gentle word spoken alone to some erring one, the unseen struggle against sin, or, the unknown spiritual martyrdom, that we may "live" unto God? Yes; who can tell? Surely, He who commanded "secret" fasting, alms, and prayer, will know all about our "secret" love to Himself, and all we are, and do, and suffer for His dear sake. Does Jesus know? Then, that is enough for me.

See, then, that we all think more of the kingdom of God within us than of the applause of the world without us. The Lord is our Judge; Jesus is our Saviour; the Word is our guide; the Holy Spirit is the keeper of our infirmities. The world is nothing to us. Reality—eternal reality—aim at that. My message this morning is ended.

SPIRITUAL STATUARY.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM JAMES ACOMB.

ISAIAH li. 1.

"Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged."

COMPARISONS are odious; comparisons are highly profitable. They are odious if prompted by malice or meanness. Permit a homely example. A genius who had risen to a seat in the Commons was reminded by a shallow aristocrat in the lobby that he had formerly been his servant. "Well," retorted the man of talent, "and did I not serve you well?" Such comparisons are hateful; but they may also prove beneficial as promoting due humility and appreciative thankfulness. Take the case of Paul, who, though an apostle of very exceptional ability, would remind himself that he was the chief of sinners. As though he had said, "Now, Paul, look unto the rock whence you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence you were digged."

And it is doubtless serviceable for each of us, however devoted and pure, to be now and then presented with a photograph of our former selves. We can thus see what we should have remained if grace had not elevated and refined us. We can measure our growth and development. We can certainly better understand the obligations arising from improved conditions.

I. Let us note the retrospect that was recommended to this godly remnant of Israel.

In all ages have existed those to whom God could thus appeal. Their characteristics are ever the same—viz., the endeavour to live righteously and the instinctive craving for a fuller knowledge of God. Such were here bidden to recall the period when their great father, Abraham, had been separated from heathen surroundings, led,

and instructed by the divine Spirit till worthy of the appellation, Friend of God. The nation had been a stone cut out of the mountains without hands and fashioned into something like beauty and grace.

Now, what is true in regard to Israel holds good in relation to personal life. With the latter we propose more particularly to deal in this discourse.

In regard to individual stones, it would appear that the work of the Divine Statuary is threefold—viz., detachment from the common mass of material; moulding by religious education and attrition of association; vivification of spiritual faculties by the Holy Ghost. These three things may, in measure, be wrought simultaneously; but we will illustrate them respectively.

We are, then, originally in the mass, first in the quarry, incapable of self detachment. A stone has no ability to leap from its place. The quarryman must by pick and gunpowder and hammer set the granite free. There is grace at the outset, either in national or individual life. What hast thou that thou hast not received? Every Christian is like Ariel in *The Tempest*, who was liberated from the massive tree where he had been imprisoned by those who hated him. Have we not all felt the bondage of solidarity, the paralysing effect of corporate attraction? Yea, old Adam is too strong till Divine Grace bring its implements.

In a certain sense it may be conceded that all who constitute a Christian community may be said to be quarried or detached. If you look across the world of chicanery, sensuality, and deviltry in general, it will be at once perceptible that one stage, at least, has been accomplished in all of you. All progress and attainment are relative. If we open the Epistles we find that the early churches were aggregates of religionists in various stages of spirituality. Some were addressed as "perfect"; to others Paul had to write, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." And yet he speaks of them as called and separate, distinct from the heathendom around.

At the mouth of a quarry is often seen a heap of stones, detached, cyclopean, not hewn. Thus do we get masses of stones levered by Christian work out of the mass, but still unhewn, unpolished. They

lie about in endless variety to hand, ready for the pious artificer. Think of the thousand and one irrevitant objects our religious institutions, and remember that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. What is a church but a spiritual sculptor's yard?

But in the fullest sense we all know that people in a congregation like this need graciously saving. You are better than the broad world of unbelievers, but hopelessly lost without the energy of the Holy Ghost. Your spiritual senses are, whatever the accomplishments of life, locked up; you are blind to the beauty of Christ and the grandeur of the kingdom of God. The voices of Heaven, so significant, pass unheeded.

You have to be rescued, separated from the power of death, lifted from the sphere of human passions. To do this, various agencies are employed—some almost dynamic, others more gentle. In blasting rocks, now an explosive and now a lime cartridge will be employed. Thus the gaoler required an earthquake to make a Christian of him; but Lydia was saved by gentler means. But neither possessed the power of self-redemption.

Then remember that quarried stones need moulding, whether granite, limestone, or Bath freestone. Hammer and chisel must be applied. So I take it that when detached we must expect to submit to peculiar processes. Some stones necessitate great labour; others can easily be wrought to any form. Shakespeare is given to present abstract ideas in concrete forms to suit the ordinary obtuse Englishman. Thus we understand Caliban. This low-type creature stands before us destitute of moral sense; his strongest motive to action fear of punishment; he hates unreasonably the best of beings; he luxuriates in grossest vice; his brain so feeble that he kneels to a drunkard. Now the national poet has contrasted this brute-man with Prospero, the refined courtier, the gentle father, the magnanimous Duke of Milan, thus exhibiting the diverse effects of Christian culture and heathen neglect. In one you behold the rough, angular, unhewn block; in the other the exquisitely moulded statue. To assimilate them, what a complicated miracle would be requisite! This is the mission of our Lord and Redeemer.

And how honoured are we to be fellow-workers with Him! And how ample the scope for our loving industry!

Heaps of stones about and in every one an angel!—only the angel requires to be got out, modelled out, chiselled out, filed out. We can't see the angel; God can. The word of the Lord is hammer and chisel, chipping away at our angles, deformities, and disproportions.

Thus none can be a holy person without pain. Salvation is not the deed of a moment, but is a gradual work, stage by stage, here a little and there a little. It is an indefinite progress, a growth in the graces of righteousness, truth, and goodness, and assimilation to Divine ideals till the beauty of the Lord is visible upon us. Let the example of the ages make us patient. History is a temple full of sculptures. They acquired that perfection as the ponderous and yet artistic oak gained its magnificent proportions year by year, appropriating certain qualities and submitting to certain laws.

We also require, in addition to quarrying and moulding, the process of quickening by the breath of spiritual life. Behold this oil painting. Study it narrowly. The subject is the animation of Pandora. Pandora, the gift of Zeus, to neutralize the philanthropy of Prometheus, has been sculptured by Vulcan. The gods have animated the stone. You find in the picture Pandora just evolved from cold marble to a living woman. The stone has began to pulsate, the limbs have acquired freedom of movement, the fair face has tinted into wondrous beauty, the eyes are downcast with modest intelligence. The Seasons, lovely angelic forms, approach with a sparkling garland to crown Pandora with every gift, as the name indicates. Venus reclines here at the left, watching the effect of life upon the stone.

What a parable of life everlasting! Ye must be born again. Many of you have been wrought from the quarry and rough-hewn by Christian civilisation; but you require the grandest thing of all—viz., the breath of spiritual life. Ye modelled into shape but not quickened, you resemble the images set in the English Churches by the Romanists, dead in the midst of religion.

Or, like the child-delighting marionettes that are so skillfully moved by invisible machinery, but which have no appreciation of the part they play, thus you may be actuated by the forces of custom, or tradition, or fear, but remain dead to all sensations of a purely spiritual nature. If alive, you would pulsate and express the sentiments of goodness. If alive, living words would enter the ears of your soul and awaken joyous

cognition. If alive, you would strike out and not be content with a mere automatic existence. If alive, we should find growth, the beauty of virtue and positive existence.

All the figures of the Bible imply the necessity of life, of more than outward garnish or mechanical uniformity. Observe this grand sketch in Ezekiel xxxvii. Note these dry bones in the valley; behold them inspired by natural attraction, gathering bone to his bone: observe flesh covering the unsightly skeleton: and yet there is lacking the essential vitality. Nor is the allegory left incomplete. "Come from the four winds, O breath [as though all heaven were concerned in their mystic regeneration], and breathe upon these slain, and they shall live."

A singular cactus has been discovered in South America, the blossoms of which are only visible when the wind is blowing. During a gale a myriad of the pretty flowers peep from little knobs on the stems. Thus, when the beneficent force of the Holy Spirit is exerted upon us, do the latent capabilities of our nature burst forth. In each of us "feelings lie buried that grace can restore." It is a source of infinite satisfaction to be persuaded that the activity of this "power that maketh for righteousness" is incessant in the hearts of men, and that the thousand holy forces and agencies of heaven and earth so graciously co-operate to the end that multitudes find it harder to be lost than redeemed. Our God is the God of salvation.

II. Let us consider the purposes of the suggested retrospection. Judging from the context, the intention was to promote humility and to stimulate hopefulness.

1. To promote humility. Just as the victors in their triumphal demonstrations were accompanied by a slave who whispered, "Thou art mortal," so here allow me to quicken your sense of obligation.

Christians, think of that time when God first broke the spell that held you in its grasp, and of the dead weight you were to lift out of the quarry on to the level of Christian life and character! Think of the unconscious resistance you opposed to all this ministry of love, not understanding its significance! Think of all the hammering, and chiselling, and shaping you got through those early days, and how you oft resented it! Think of the peculiar sensations that thrilled you when God imbued the spirit elixir from the spring of eternal youth!

Think of the awakening of the soul's senses; how differently you heard the Gospel and perceived the relative importance of perishable and heavenly objects; how sensitive you became; and how speech soon relieved the overcharged heart! Think of it, and soften again, and trample all pride under foot, and let a stream of grateful thoughts flow through your mind! Think of it, and be patient to others passing through similar processes of pain, and lend assistance! Think of it, and be careful to let no graving tool of the devil spoil the symmetrical beauty of your godly character! Think of it, that you, a polished Christian, be not found in degrading associations! Think of it, that if further establishment is to be accomplished, it may not be hindered by instability or refractoriness!

Think of it, I say—of that very humble beginning, of that day of small things, as King David did when he made the mighty collection for Solomon's Temple, and asked, "Who am I, and what my people, that we should be able to offer after this sort?" Think of it, as many a successful merchant has done when he has in after years peeped into the dingy shop where he served his apprenticeship, and remembered the privations of it, and grew kinder to his subordinates after his visit to his birthplace. Think of it, my honoured minister or literary brother, as Carlyle must have done when he retired to the farmhouse in the wild country of his native Scotland while all the world was reading his books! Think of it, Christian brother and sister, and fulfil the vows solemnly made in bygone days, that if God brought you out of the horrible pit of difficulty and doubt into the promised land of milk and honey a life of devotion should mark your appreciation of His goodness to you!

Yea; all of us may look into the rock whence we were hewn with manifest advantage, lest we forget God and grow, like Uzziah, proud and presumptuous.

2. The additional motive of this retrospective view was to stimulate hopefulness. Nothing helps one upward so much as the remembrance of past accomplishments. We instinctively argue, "If so much, why not more?" Reading the context, where the godly were encouraged by a glimpse into a renaissance, a good time coming, we note that the prospect of a future ennoblement follows the humiliation of a painful [illegible]. As Easter grows out of Lent, and as the Door of Hope

is graciously opened in the Valley of Achor, so the birth of loftier attainments succeeds the travail of self-repudiation.

God has always some better thing in store for us. As it stands here, the goodness of the Lord in bygone days is a reason for further unfoldings. The stones having been quarried are not to lie about half-hewn, grown over with nettles and brambles, but to enjoy minute and artistic finish, coupled with proper elevation. Some of you remember the statues of Versailles, so full of grace, amid congenial surroundings. Thus ultimately we may hope to find our appropriate sphere. Possibly time was when those marbles at Versailles lay about in out of the way places, and if thought and speech had been theirs, they would have exclaimed, "There is a discrepancy between our deserts and our position!" If they could have spoken when landed at Versailles, would they have echoed as they surveyed the surrounding taste and magnificence, "This is our element; here we shall be understood; now we can rejoice"?

Thus does our Father in heaven set before His children the future sphere of combined dignity and harmony, so that we, who are often oppressed by the poverty of our present life, may patiently await the exaltation due to us. Many of you possess a soul larger than the mean circumstances of your life, and are cribbed, cabined, and confined by cast-iron limitations. But you are saved by hope. With all your difficulties about the future, it is evidently a time of enlargement, of wider horizon, of deeper knowledge, of purer surroundings, of more glorious capabilities.

Permit me here to make a quotation from Gilfillan's essay on Coleridge: "But a completed Coleridge has been too noble a product for us yet. Are such tantalising fragments finished in another world? It is a curious question. If so, how interesting the spectacle of a mild-tempered Milton; a humble and bending Byron; a Shelley on his knees; a Goethe warmed into a seraph, and 'summering high in bliss upon the hills of God'; a many-sided Southey; a wide-minded Wordsworth; a believing Godwin; a healthy and happy Keats; a holy Burns; a Poe clothed and in his right mind; a Coleridge with the crevices in his nature filled up, and his self-control equal to his transcendent genius! Whether the future world may show us such rounded

harmonies as our words have described we cannot tell; but it is very pleasant to conceive of them as possible."

Brethren, have we not a sure word of prophecy which declares that Christ is able to present each one of us faultless before the throne? Therefore we may safely conclude that all "the crevices of our nature" will be filled up. What is not accomplished amid the ofttime unfavourable conditions of this life will be completed amid the resources and capabilities of the future.

Just one painful reflection. The other day I saw an Apollo that had been found in Rome. It was headless, with one arm, and otherwise defaced. And one naturally thought of the many works of the Redeemer's art that have been sadly mutilated in the rough handling of the world. And one wondered if yonder all those that have thus suffered will be restored. Walk through a city—nay, look through this sanctuary—and note it some have not been maimed or deformed. They want some spiritual limb, or are strangely out of proportion.

Brethren, my hope is that God will perfect that which concerneth us.

THE TIME OF OLD AGE.

BY THE REV. JOHN ALDIS.

Preached in Regent's-park, Sunday, August 2, 1885.

PSALM lxxi, 9.

"Cast me not off in the time of old age. Forsake me not when my strength faileth.

I VENTURE to say that none of you ever heard this text preached from before. The young naturally would not advert to it. Somehow the old do not seem to like to do so. Still, old age is one of the facts in human life, and it has its interest and its relation. We invite your attention to it now. All things stand mercifully related to man's highest interest. There is a grand purpose of mercy to be wrought out in connection with human life, and every stage of human life has its peculiarities both of interest and of duty. There is in the exemplification of character through every phase of life something worthy of contemplation; and the Divine discipline and the Divine [illegible] dealing with [illegible] should give to it an amount of interest to every mind.

Let me, then, direct your attention to some general thoughts connected with "the time of old age." And, first, be it good or ill, few comparatively share it. Most die young. More die under twenty than over. Many, too, with [illegible] will depart in their prime. Burns and Byron in the walk of poetry, Pascal in the higher walk of philosophy. Many, too, distinguished by their piety and devotedness [illegible] early called away. I know that here is room for illusion. Their goodness may seem to us all the better because they were so early taken away from us, for [illegible] every day's story. There are some notable instances to the contrary also. The most beloved of the apostles lived to be a long way the oldest still. The [illegible] remains illustrated through all the [illegible] of life in the Bible history, and in our own human history. Among those who are said to have died in the faith the first name [illegible] at once in blood and martyrdom. Enoch

the type of antediluvian piety, shared but thirty-six years in comparison with ninety-six shared by Methuselah. Abijah, the only one of Jeroboam's family in whom any good thing toward the Lord God of Israel was found, was cut off very early. Josiah, the fearless king of Judah, did not reach forty. The most saintly and precious promise of all our English kings died at fifteen. Among missionaries Brainerd did not reach to be quite thirty—Henry Martin only about thirty-one. The sainted McCheyne died before thirty—Samuel Pearce at little more than thirty-three.

To how many speculations these facts have given rise! Some have said that the organization required for such refined and exalted natures is too delicate for the rough usage of the world. Others, again, have said that the sword is too sharp for the scabbard. One of the heathen poets declared "whom the gods love die young." It would seem that what is unfinished here may be finished hereafter, and that what is so mysterious to us now may be more fully explained hereafter. Recognising this thought, that they belonged to Him who made them, and were fitted for the saintly world to which they had been removed that there they may live a perfect life and do a perfect work, we can only bow. This, however, is certain, that only a comparatively few live to be old.

How many of you who are young will live to be old? At what date will your career be stopped, when your last breath will be drawn, God only knows. More or fewer, let all your days be given up to the Redeemer. Dying early, or at a later period, only seek to live for Christ, and then to die in Christ; and, being so, for you to live, less or more, will be Christ, and for you to die, whenever you die, will be eternal and glorious gain.

But, in regard to old age, the first remark I make is that the time of old age is specially the time for prayer. The whole of human life should be steeped in devotion. It is that which recognises the highest relation of that life to the God who gave it, and sustains it, and hallows all its workings, and blesses all its issues: and yet the time of old age is pre-eminently the fitting time for prayer, partly on account of personal need, partly on account of past mercy.

I say that it is so on account of personal need. This is the matter set before us in the text. "Cast me not off in the time of old age. Forsake

me not when my strength faileth." There is an appeal to the Divi
compassion. This the heavenly Father always welcomes and honou
It is in the supreme distinction of His nature. How He proclaims i
"The Lord God merciful and gracious." It is a frequent title in th
Psalms, "full of compassion." To what else can weakness turn
hopefully, so trustfully, so joyfully? Human life is compared to a jou
ney. Men grow tired after long walking. All pilgrims find it so. "H
weakens my strength by the way." If a man is left, then it is all ov
with him. The burden is so heavy that he must sink; the work is
hard that he must faint; the conflict so severe that he must be va
quished. But to come in then with timely help is altogether Divin
"Man's extremity is God's opportunity." Hence the strength of th
invitation: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble." That is the last da
on which your friends and acquaintances wish you to call upon the
It is altogether a contrast to human life. Men welcome the rich, th
strong, the great. Confronted with poverty and weakness and humili
tion the weak despair, the cold depart. If a man succeeds, as D
Johnson says about the Earl of Chesterfield, they "encumber him wit
help;" but if he falls among thieves and gets wounded and plundere
the priest and the Levite will pass by on the other side. It is the di
tinction of the Divine goodness to bring grace to help in time of nee
It is a grand testimony to the Divine honour; it will come from quive
ing lips, and yet from a glowing heart—"Thou hast known my soul
adversity. In the day that I cried Thou answeredst me, and strength
ened me with strength in my soul." And yet this is only the fulfilme
of the Divine word. It turns the promise round into a living fact
experience. "Even unto old age I am He. Even to hoar hairs I w
carry you." And it is thus, therefore, that while the weakness is th
greatest the leaning may be the *most* complete: and just when man
least in himself he has to seek and find most in the God of heaven.

But old age is also very appropriately the time of prayer by reason
past memories. That is so in the whole of this psalm. The Psalmi
calls to mind what God has done for him. "Thou hast taught me fro
my youth." Well, he makes that a ground of expectation that Go
would carry on and complete what he had begun. That is the logic
the heart. A child can understand it. Oh, how the child goes to th
mother that has always and freely given! Growing years will confirm

Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through.

The teaching, too, had fitted the Psalmist both to help his fellows and to honour the most High. The lessons he had learnt were to him of priceless worth. They were the most glorious and impressive that could enlarge the mind, or hallow the convictions, or bind the conscience, or exalt the life and character. They had brought to him the surprise of gladness and the repose of faith. While, therefore, he mused, the fire kindled; then spake he with his tongue: "I have declared Thy wondrous works." He had thus got good and done good. He had been happy himself and made other people happy, too. Besides, he loved the Most High, and longed to exalt Him, and he could not bear to be dumb. His purpose was, therefore, fixed: "Until I have showed Thy strength to this generation, and Thy power to every one that is to come." Besides, in a way he was better fitted for this task—spite of his weakness better fitted. His eyes might be dull; his voice might be broken; but he saw the works and ways of God's mercy clearly. He held them with a firmer grip, and loved them with a more fervent love. Besides, he had acquired influence, and he would use it all, and use it for the very best ends. And there is nothing so useful as to bring men to know and trust the Most High—nothing more fitting in a man than to remember his indebtedness and to acknowledge the Divine benefits; and, grand as the Psalmist seems in many of the recorded utterances of his lips or the jottings of his pen, never does he seem so grand as when, in the plenitude of his memories of God's great goodness, his whole soul goes out in the words: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and amen."

Note, in the second place, the time of old age is the time of harvest. I see what great interest there is in this, as I am coming up to London and see the reaping almost everywhere: how they are all stirred up, and their countenances are bright, and their energies more brought out. Old age is the time of reaping. The Preacher Ecclesiastes sums up and applies a long sermon with the words: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Otherwise the evil days will come, and the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." That is

sometimes understood to mean—but certainly it does not mean—that old age is a dreary and miserable business. It only means that a godless old age must be so. Human life is everywhere retributive. Work and wages are the universal law. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The final harvest is in eternity. The last judgment will bring home to men the works of the flesh. All who stand before the judgment seat of Christ will receive the things done in the body according to that they have done. True, there is a method of mercy, and if a man, however wicked he may have been, sincerely repent of his sin, and plead and trust the merits of the sinless sacrifice, his sins shall be blotted out; they shall not be mentioned; they shall not even be remembered. But, if not repented of, they will prove the life of the worm that dieth not and the fuel of the fire that is not quenched. But there is another seed-time—youth; another harvest—old age; and the second is the ripened result of the first. If youth is passed in listless frivolity, old age will be childish or idiotic; but if it be passed in careful research and thoughtful study, it will be ripe in knowledge and understanding. If youth is passed in storing the false, the foul, the malicious, old age will be like the land of Egypt, hideous and loathsome, with its frogs and gadfly; but if it be passed in fellowship with the true, the pure, the loving, old age will be like Eden, [illegible] grass, and flowers, and ruddy and ripe fruit. If in youth the passions are unchastened and burning, they will grow into [illegible]. If ruled and hallowed by the life of Christ, they will grow into bright angels with heavenly music. Hence the skill manifested by John Bunyan. I have often wondered at it. He wrote in the prime of life; he did not live to be an old man and yet Beulah is close to the river, and in sight of the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem. And so, beloved, in all Christian experience this is the palpable result—the gathering in of a precious harvest in the time of old age. Dear young people, you little dream of the importance of your everyday duty. [illegible] things which I learnt when a boy, I could wish them at the nethermost parts of creation, and they will not go. Blessed be God, every chapter committed to memory, every hymn, all that I learnt then and cherished, is priceless now; for things show out with wonderful vividness when the eyes grow dim, and the early treasurings of boyhood become the richest treasurings possible to the soul of man. "Remember now thy Creator in the

days of thy youth," and then the evil days will never come when you say, "I have no pleasure in them."

In the third place, the time of old age is the time of fixedness. The wise man says, "Train up a child in the way he will go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Why not? Many reasons may be assigned. This is one: he enjoyed the early days, and so he loves them and will not part from them. People laugh at old folk for speaking so highly of the former days. Yet that is in nature. It always has been and always will be. Let the laughters wait till they grow old, and they will do just the same. In youth the senses are quick. Every glance flashes; every sound rings. In youth the passions are strong. The tide rises and rushes and rolls. In youth hope lends rich forms and colours to the prospect. Morning is the similitude of joy; evening the sign of sadness. Nine people out of ten prefer the spring to the time of blossom and song. The golden glories of autumn are only the hectic of decay. If a child has been trained in a way, he likes it, and rejoices in it, and when he is old he will not go away from it. But the real force created is habit. "Use is second nature." In earlier days men prepare the facilities and the forces of later days. How absurd it would be to send people to apprenticeship at seventy years of age! They could not learn. All would be useless. So in every event of life the same rule will be found to apply. When men get old their passions cool; but their affections grow firmer, and their will grows stubborn. That sapling may be easily uprooted. That grown tree must be cut down. The old man will often see a better way, and sigh to enter it; but nature cries: "To late! too late!" In everything the law is imperative and irrevocable. If wisdom speak, it is by this rule: "They that seek Me early shall find me." In grace, as in nature, "*now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation." The Lord meets every one at the threshold and says: "My son, my daughter, give Me thy heart."

Oh, it will be a blessed thing if some one be [illegible] morning should be led to give up in full surrender!

> Take my poor heart, and let it be
> For ever sealed to all but Thee.

O Christ, be near, and invite and bless!

In the fourth place, old age is the time of testimony, or ought to be

and, it right, will be. Those to whom we refer have seen a good deal. They have had discipline and experience. They ought to have knowledge and conviction, and they ought to bear testimony of this for the honour of the Most High, and for the advantage of those with whom they have to do. It was so with the Psalmist. He acted on this rule as every one ought to act. In his day the trial of faith was this—it was a dispensation of temporal rewards and punishments; yet they saw sometimes the wicked man prospering and the godly man seeming to suffer. Still he bore his testimony and said: "I have been young, but now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging their bread." The trial of faith in these days would rather seem to be in the pride and prevalence of unbelief. I own that it does not move me. You ask me why. Well, the work of the Good Spirit in every man's own heart must for that man be the most personal and perfect and abiding ground of confidence. Yet, apart from that, this fixes and satisfies me—that the Gospel in itself, in its teaching, and in its effects is only goodness. "There is none good but one, that is God;" and goodness can come from Him and from Him alone. The highest thoughts of goodness have never been taught by anything but the Gospel. The highest forms of goodness have never been inspired by anything else. Where that Gospel is most simply received and most fully followed, there goodness is most vital and vigorous. Among all that I have known that have rejected the Gospel, none have been eminent for goodness, and every one who has rejected it has been none the better, but sometimes manifestly the worse, for rejecting it. The highest and most beneficent men I have ever known have loved that Gospel most, and as they have loved and lived it they have grown in goodness. For myself, I have never enthroned it in my conscience and heart and life but it has been to me the law of truth and rectitude and love and joy. Always and everywhere that is the true sign. Beloved, it cannot fail. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

But in the fifth place, old Age is the time of farewell and welcome, giving up and getting. I say it is the time of farewell. There is one expression used by the Apostle Paul: "Though our outward man perish." Then it does perish: all biography tells us that. We follow on the pathway of Jacob. How quicksighted he always was, especially

when his own interests were concerned! But the record is at last, "Now the eyes of Israel were dimmed for age." We read of Asa, his acts and his might; but the record also is, "Nevertheless, in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet." Ever so. The moment we begin to live we all begin to die. No exception; it cannot be. And yet what is it that dies and perishes? "The outer man," only that: "the lips that speak, the eyes that look, the feet that walk, the hands that toil." "The outer man?" say you. "Why, to shelter and adorn and nourish that is the Alpha and Omega of most people's lives. They seem to have nothing else to do, nothing else to think about, or to wish for." Yet it is only the outer man, the seat of appetites and passions, most akin to the animal, nearest to the earth, instrument of the lower functions, channel of the meaner joys. We read of Barzillai just now—that old man—that he said: "Can I any longer hear the voice of singing men and singing women?" Doubtless he could. He meant: "Can I any longer enjoy it?" He did not. There was in it too much noise and show, and too little mind and heart. He had no objection to see the young folk run off to see the fireworks: it was very pleasant for them; but he preferred to look into the still heavens. The voice that sent man from Eden said: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." So as men grow old they look down and stoop and sink into the earth. The aged one is tired. He wants rest. The grave is his bed. How terrible for men to lie down with all their sins upon them! How sweet to be able in the last extreme of weakness and old age to repeat the words which dear Dr. Steane repeated so shortly before he breathed his last!—

> In age and feebleness extreme
> Who can my sinful soul redeem?
> Jesus, my only hope Thou art,
> Strength of my failing fleshly heart;
> Let me enjoy one smile from Thee,
> Then drop into eternity.

We shall all say, farewell. That must be. There is nothing sad in it that I know of if you are going into a better state. It must be sad if there is no hope beyond.

But the time of a Christian man's old age is the time of greeting. There is something better. Life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel. He who died lives again and lives for evermore, and He is the resurrection and the life; and whoso liveth and believeth in Him shall never die, or, if he die, shall live again.

Oh, for more grace to realise our true position in the faith, not to be so sense-bound and earth-bound, to reap the full joy of those who "know in whom they have believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed to Him against that day." Is it so with you? Where are you? You know the farewell must come

That is inevitable. That world [illegible] neither grace nor goodness—neither faith nor repentance: that is sure. But the opening—the beyond! "Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people," for the world is a world of growth, growth till the harvest, and there is an ingathering. We have to train [illegible] minds [illegible] for other occupations and enjoyments than those that earth can yield.

Oh, dear young friends, come away to my Saviour, my blessed Master! Learn of Him; sit at His feet. Pray to be imbued with his temper. Give up all your interests to His keeping. They will then be safe. And submit all your waywardness to His will, and then the final act, the last scenes and duties of life, will be welcoming into something beyond. Oh, that is a blessed thing to think of: "They that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."

Who are they? Well, they are gracious souls—those who have loved, enjoyed, and cherished the means of grace. Do you love them? In harmony with that promise is the testimony of the apostle: "The inward man is renewed day by day." Yes—the flesh decays; the spirit lives. The senses grow dull; but thought grows clearer and convictions grow stronger. Dreary memories lose their bitterness; holy ones get lighted up with a heavenly gladness. The simplest things in nature shine with a heavenly light. The bloom and freshness and vigor seem an image of the untainted land. Earth ceases to distract and to dazzle. Strength declines [illegible] darkness dies, and the soul is even as a weaned child. The [illegible] from the church, but the power has gone from the heart. The [illegible] will with Jesus, but then home is near, and home's rest and [illegible] and gladness and love. How grand old Brazillai looked, in the midst of defection and greed and malice, himself loyal, noble, generous! How well we like to read the doings and the saying of one "Paul the aged!" How we sympathize with that old disciple, [illegible] to help! How glad we are to read of Anna giving thanks and speaking to all about the Saviour! How sweet it seems to stand with Simeon and hear him sing his *nunc dimittis*, with the Saviour in his arms: "Now, Lord, lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." I wish to bear this testimony: it is from my heart. We speak far too much and fear too often about the sadness and miseries and discipline of this life. Our song should be of mercy, evermore penetrated and filled [illegible] with the wondrous goodness of God, for, at every period of life and in all circumstances, if we are right and our views are right, and our hearts are loving, everything will be matter for a song of praise, till at last the senses of earth pass away, and we go to a blessed country where our song shall be without a jarring note, and where our joy shall be full and overflowing for ever.

The Lord grant His blessing. Amen.